

COMIC BOOK
ART TIPS & TECHNIQUES

You begin with an idea and a...

SKETCH

FEBRUARY, 2000

vol. 1 no.1

\$5.95 u.s.

\$8.40 can.

**Drawing
Dynamic Figures**

**Themes
of Color**

NETWORKING:

The Process of Making Contacts

**Digital
Coloring**

**Designing
Outside the Panel**

Submissions

MANGA

ART TIPS by

David Mack creator of

Kabuki

WARNING

PARTS UNKNOWN

Beau Smith - Brad Gorby



You've been warned!
Beau

JUNE 2000

WWW.SACREDSTUDIOS.COM

Cover by Dwayne Turner

Image

A Note...

A newsletter that's all...
just a simple newsletter.

Most things seems to grow from a simple idea. Take this magazine for example. When Mike and I sat down to discuss a newsletter for the art community that would be sponsored by Blue Line, that's all we thought we would be doing is a simple newsletter.

Well...

Just leave me alone for a few minutes and the ideas start flowing, we want creators that are working in the field of comics to participate with articles and tips, *a newsletter*, we wanted to highlight the different jobs that are available in this market, *a newsletter*, we want to open an arena for creators to communicate to one another, *maybe a newsletter*, we want to show the masses that comics are as fun to create as they are to read, *a magazine*, to reach the masses we'll need sponsorship (advertising), *definitely a magazine*.

See how a chain reaction of simply wanting to show how much fun it is to create comics gave way to creating this magazine.

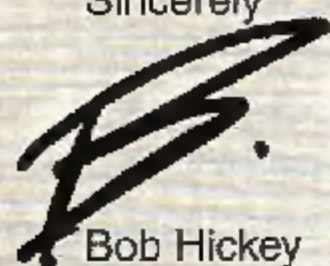
I'm sure all of you have had this problem of expanded imagination. You create a character and then the villians and sidekicks, cities, battles... see it's that simple.

In a future issue we will touch on how you can take that expanded imagination and produce some comics and mini-comics to share with your family and friends.

I would like to thank all of those who came through with information and articles on a very short notice, Beau Smith, Tom Bierbaum, Joe Corroney, Dan Davis, Paul Sizer, Gary Reed, Steve Oliff, also those who have helped us to get it to the fans Frank at Diamond Comics, Wayne and Jerry FM International, also a special thanks goes to David Mack.

Next issue Darryl Banks and Flint Henry jump on board.

Sincerely



Bob Hickey

bobh@bluepro.com

inside

feature

David Mack



pg.4

words

Beau Smith

Gary Reed

Paul Sizer

pg.8

pg.36

pg.36

the stuff

Writing by Tom Bierbaum

Pencilling by Joe Corroney

Inking by Dan Davis

Coloring by Steve Oliff

Computer Coloring by Chris Riley

Lettering by Ward LeRoc

Drawing Manga

Self Publishing / Small Press

Art Book Review

pg.10

pg.12

pg.20

pg.49

pg.50

pg.44

pg.42

pg.38

pg.24



misc.

Convention Listing

Printer Directory

Classifieds

Business Directory

pg.34

pg.35

pg.35

pg.34



THE COVER...

This cover was created using two different images. First the photo of David Mack. Once we scanned it in black and white and sized the photo we then placed it over the Kabuki image. We lightened the edges of the Kabuki image to give it a glow effect. After these two images are placed together on layers we then added the Sketch logo and issue text. Keeping everything on layers we are able to make editorial changes to each part without starting over.

Tools: Photoshop 4.0,
Microtek Scan Maker Scanner.

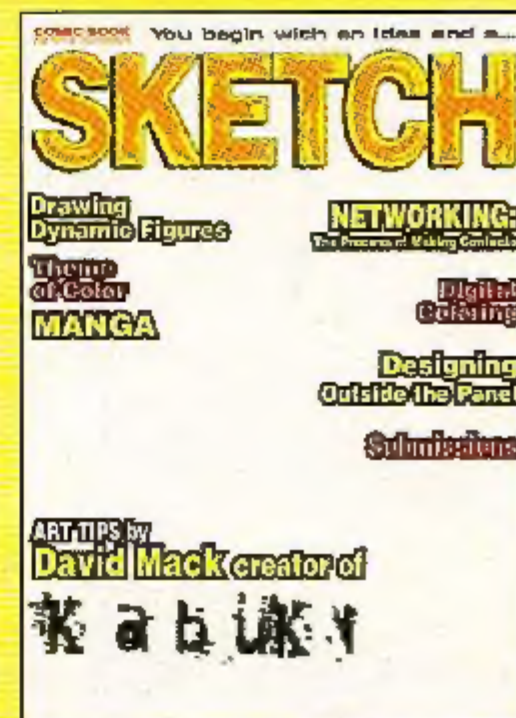
Time: 2 hours.



Kabuki image scanned as color 300 dpi. Edges are lightened. Placed under b&w photo on layer one.



Color photo scanned as black & white image at 300 dpi. Placed on layer two.



Sketch Logo and editorial text created in Corel Draw 7. Then exported as an .ai file at 300 dpi. Imported as layer three

DAVID MACK

CREATOR OF KABUKI / WRITER OF DAREDEVIL

AT IMAGE

AT MARVEL

question. What are you working on...

david. Right now (as always) I'm focused on several projects (some immediate, some a ways off). My immediate priorities are The Kabuki series, the Kabuki Film, Daredevil, and the Kabuki-Scarab series.

question. Why Daredevil...

david. When Joe (Quesada) asked me on board (about two years ago) he cited Kabuki-Circle of Blood. He particularly enjoyed how the antagonist (Kai) was handled. Joe felt that DD had few villains that were uniquely his own. He wanted me to introduce a new rival for DD and bring something new to his relationship with the Kingpin. Joe liked that I use a variety of different styles and media to illustrate different characters, moods, or points of view when I'm illustrating Kabuki. I will be bringing this to DD. I will be using a variety of graphic languages. Working with Joe has been wonderful in this regard. Whenever I write for another artist, I always provide that artist with layouts to communicate my intentions. But I then leave it to the artist's instincts as to how

many of my suggestions they use. Joe's pencils have captured some of my better ideas & sensibilities, and married them with his own dynamic style. He's even drawn in different styles for different scenes. This will be a more artistically adventurous DD story. Even the new colorist (Richard Isonove) has risen to the challenge. The coloring is amazing and experimental. It sometimes appears he's even borrowing from my own painted and mixed media styles when it's appropriate to the scene.

question. How will your approach to writing these two varying comics differ? Do you think there are many, if any, similarities between these two comics?

david. The similarities are that each relate to the world differently from most people primarily because of traumatic incidents that occurred in their childhood and have taken something from them physically. They each have issues with their parents that stem from childhood. Both have the need to hide their handicap or disfigurement behind the identity of a

mask. And ultimately each must learn to turn their disadvantage (psychological and physical) into their advantage.

The primary difference in writing them is how they receive stimulus from the world they live in. Write each from their own unique perceptions of the world. And yet each seem to constantly use some sort of psychological detective work to decipher what is happening in the world around them. They are constantly fitting together puzzle pieces of information to make sense of the environment.

question. What will happen with the Kabuki series after the current story arc ends with issue #9? Your fans are concerned that, with you taking on Daredevil and the new Kabuki Agents series, the original Kabuki will fall by the wayside.

david. I appreciate any concern that my work on DD could impact my work on Kabuki. I finished the entire DD story right after I finished Kabuki #7. So it was all done even before you read Kabuki #8. In fact that is the main reason that Kabuki #8 was nearly two months late. But rest assured my plans on Kabuki are still in effect. The current story line will climax in #9.

question. What is going on with the Kabuki animated film?

david. You may have heard that Kabuki was optioned by Fox animation a division of Twentieth Century Fox. That means that Fox bought from me the rights to develop the film. Currently they are commissioning



A page from Kabuki One Half.

The figure of the young Kabuki is referenced from a childhood photo of my girlfriend Anh. The mythical beasts above her were line drawn in black using a brush with water based ink. Then I added tone in water color paint which bleed the ink.

me to write the treatment. This entails several stages, outline and many drafts. Fortunately they pay me for each one and I am learning a LOT about writing from the opportunity to spend so much time doing it under the guidance of talented professionals. The plan is to make an Animated theatrical release. Fox wanted to do something cutting edge that breaks the mold of the Disney type, and is a mature realistic story with serious themes and an emotional impact. They decided Kabuki would be the vehicle for this. So now I am doing my best to make sure it is successfully released. When I am involved in a project I have to give it my best. That means taking the time, effort and commitment to personally write and help guide the artistic vision of the film. My recent writing schedule for Fox has caused Kabuki #9 to be a bit late, but it will be out soon. Kabuki #10 will start a new storyline. However, before I solicit for #10, I intend to take some time and finish the work for Fox. After the screenplay is done, the film won't demand as much of my time and I can concentrate on my true passion, the Kabuki comic. I will need to get focused and finish some of the series before I offer it in previews, so it isn't late and I don't feel rushed. In between Kabuki #9 and #10 the new Scarab series in Kabuki Agents will deliver an important Kabuki saga. I'm going to under hype this Scarab series so everything is a big surprise when it happens. But you won't want to miss it. It ties up some loose ends and if I say much else I could spoil the surprise.

question. Do you prefer writing an already established character or do you prefer writing a whole character's history?

david. Before DD, I have written for other artists but I had never written a character that I didn't create. It was a real challenge. The challenge is to be true to the history of the character, to respect what the other creators have brought to the character, while simultaneously bringing something new and personal to the character that compliments and enriches the characters history. After all, if my DD story doesn't bring something new to the character that only I could bring to it, why do it? I had to decide if I had something to say with the character, define what it is, and how to communicate it with respect to the rich history of the character. Ultimately this was a very satisfying process. My writing is most powerfully felt when I can relate it to my own personal feelings and write from my own experience. I was able to do this not only with DD but surprisingly well with The Kingpin. It was great to collaborate

with Joe and Jimmy & coordinate my story with Kevin's story. I learned a lot from writing an established character and it has made me a stronger writer. However nothing can compare to the satisfaction of writing a character purely from your own design and motivation.

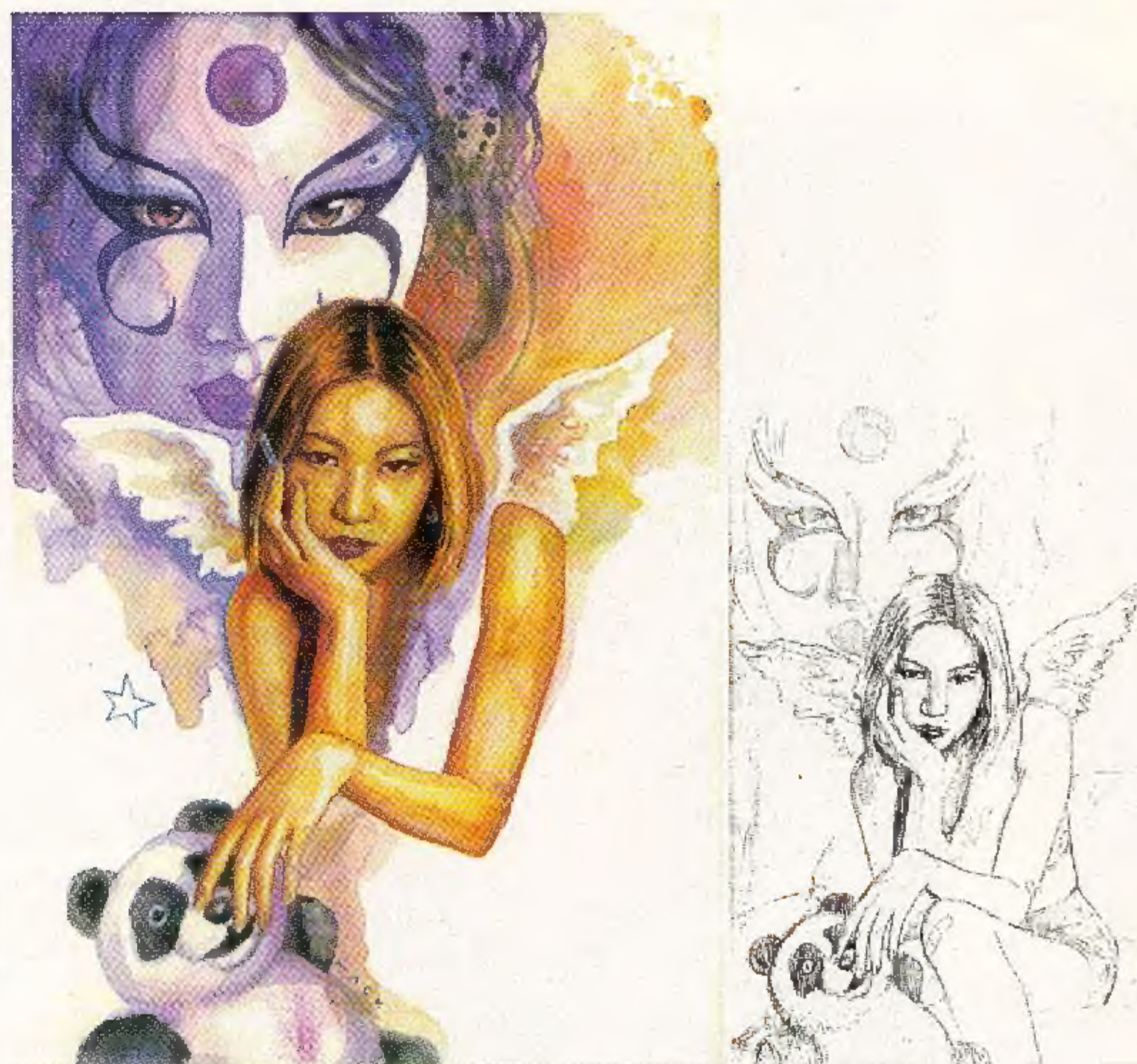
question. Do you feel a lot of pressure about taking over such a popular comic like the Daredevil? Also, what do you think about the job that Kevin Smith did with his stint with the DD?

david. As for feeling pressure about taking over such a popular character: Yes. I did. Not necessarily so much because of Kevin's popularity because I was asked to follow Kevin before Kevin had even written DD yet. Mostly the pressure is self imposed pressure that I put on myself when committing to any project. Everytime I start a Kabuki Storyline I experience extreme pressure to live up to my potential and to not disappoint myself or my readers. I feel like every project I do has to in some way be better than any project I've done before. I have to be breaking some new ground in some way. Top this normal pressure with the fact that I read the Frank

Miller DD when I was little, that I didn't want to disappoint Joe and Jimmy, and that the DD Kevin wrote became very popular, and yes, I could turn that into a lot of weight on my shoulders. The best thing for me to do was dive in. Once I started writing the story I thoroughly enjoyed it and every issue got a lot better and a lot more fun. Upon reading the finished story, I think it lives up to the demands I place on it and it adds something to the characters from my being involved. I can't wait to get people's reaction on it upon the completion of the six issue story. The writing, art and coloring really gel to bring a great feel for this book. I think it will challenge the regular DD readers and be something that Kabuki readers will also enjoy.

question. What are your plans after this Kabuki storyline is finished?

david. After Kabuki #9 I have three more Kabuki storylines written. The first will start with Kabuki #10. Scarab is to be finished with eight issues. It ends with a bang that will crossover into the current Kabuki story. I want to do a sort of Kabuki Source book (not too unlike a marvel universe) but in a official dossier format that lists



Cover for Scarab #3 with preliminary sketch.

As you can see from the pencil sketch, I first drew the entire figure. I realized the composition was more effective if I left out most of the figure. I needed to put the most details on the focus of the page (Seiko's face) and let the rest of the composition lead the eye to that focal point. If something is distracting or does not add to composition, then it should be left out. For contrast, I painted Seiko (in foreground) in warm colors and Scarab (in background) in cool colors. I tried to keep the image of scarab muted to keep the focus on Seiko.

alphabetically every character who has appeared in my books. This way readers will know all the story to each character and the subtleties involved in their past or past interaction with other characters and agencies. It should make things easier for the new Kabuki reader. Also in 2000 (I hope) I want to do a couple books of illustrated poetry. I also have stories for the other noh agents, to follow the Scarab series.. Something I've been planning for a while, is a mixed media project which for lack of a better term would be sort of an autobiographical comic.

question. *That Scarab ad that's been running on the back of the last few releases is fantastic, but I can't quite figure it out. Could you give me a quick explanation of how this image was created? (Painting? Photography collage? Photoshop?)...*

david. I'm glad you like that Scarab ad. It is intended to be the cover for the Scarab Art book. But as for computer info, I'm afraid I really can't help you. The computer work on that piece was done by Ryan Graff. He's a very skilled artist with the computer. I'll do some more stuff with him in the future.

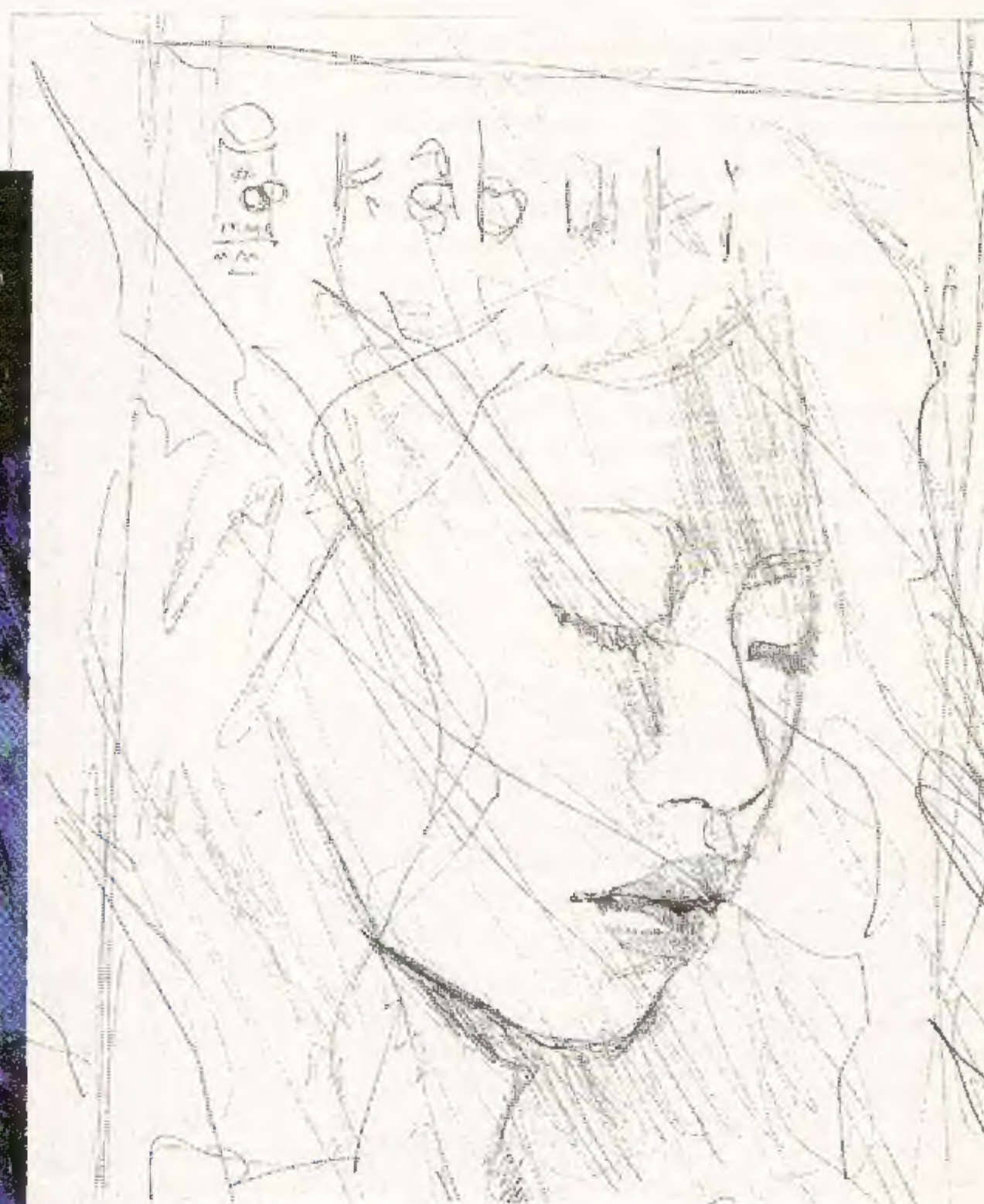
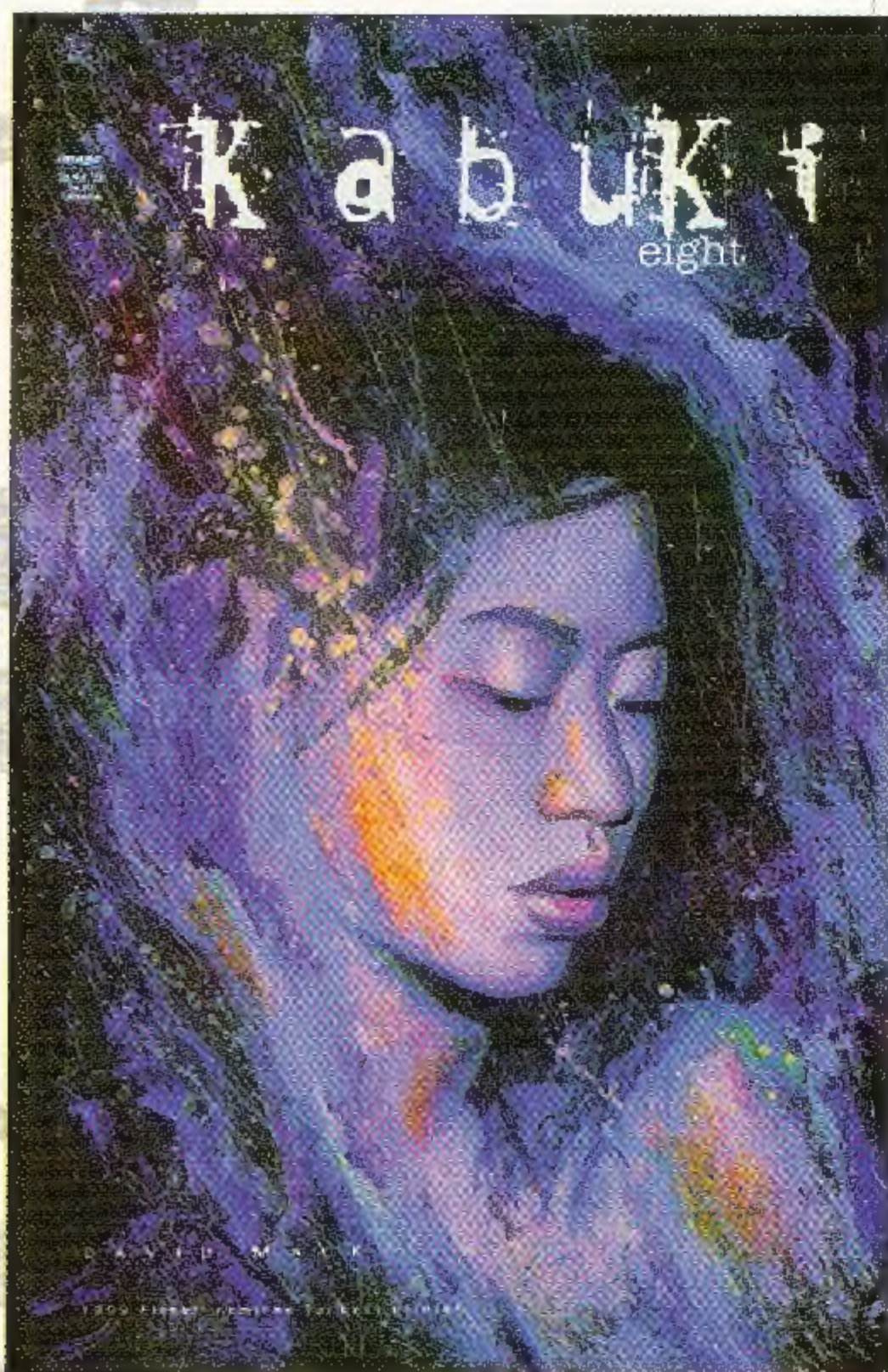
Someday(soon hopefully) when I get a bit of free time, I'll invest in some hardware

and take the time to learn some Photoshop skills. So far, I haven't used any computer manipulation of my work. Occasionally I have collaborated with someone who does. Covers to Kabuki Classics #7 and #10 are examples of my collaboration with Ashley Wood. In this case, I drew a cover and then sent it to him to add color and effects with his own touch. I know that he added this color and effects on the computer after scanning in my work but I don't know the exact process. Hopefully I'll try some computer effects on my own next year. Then ask me again how I did it and I will tell you.

question. *I am curious as to how you got into comics, compared to how it is "usually" done (if there was any difference)...*

david. How did I get into comics? Well first I realized that I enjoyed making comics because this medium was a way to integrate all the other mediums and disciplines that I enjoyed. I decided that I would indeed write and draw comics professionally (this was at age 16). Then I went about constantly writing and drawing my own stories. I took every job I could. Be it local, small or smaller. I just tried to

contribute to anything that would be published. Then with small time published printed books, I would set up at conventions and aggressively promote and discuss my work. From conventions, I would meet other creators, and publishers and customers. Customers give commissions, publishers may have small paying jobs, and creators can offer advice or can collaborate on projects with you. From this I would get more printed stuff to sell at my con tables. I also sent a story idea to Caliber and they accepted it. I was sure to execute it in a timely and professional manner (which is very important to do on every project). It was their best seller of '93. I mentioned my creator owned Kabuki idea which I had been working on for years. They began publishing it. All the while I learned everything I could about every level of the industry. I promoted my stuff very aggressively and personally. I decided early on that I wanted to write, draw, create, and own my own work. This meant that I had to work ten times as hard and that I had to learn the business side of things on every level.



Cover to Kabuki #8 with preliminary sketch. I consider the placement of the type when I'm designing the page. This rough is a sketch based on a polaroid of my girlfriend Anh.

Initially she had a hand to her head. After painting this, I decided it did not add to the composition and I painted over it. After painting the features of the face, I painted the rest of the board black, then added acrylic on top of the black and touched it up with colored pencil.

question. It seems to me that a lot of effects in your books are done through Photoshop... how do you pull off these effects...

david. I've never tried Photoshop and I don't even have a scanner yet. I layer things on the page by hand. When there is something that looks like a negative image or some kind of special effect, it's only something that I can get from a color copy machine. Some times I draw things large on one paper and then reduce it on a color copier and then collage it on the page. But someday when I get some time I'll tinker with the photoshop computer stuff.

question. Do you use photo references?

david. Most of the images of Kabuki, seen in the last three years are based on Polaroid's of my girl friend Anh tran.

Noh transmission terminated...

A letter from the Publisher

I first met David standing at my studio door with a hand full of comic pages. This was ten years ago. I later learned that he and then studio mate Joe Martin had been introduced to each other by our local comic book store (Comic Book World) owner Paul Mullins.

So I can actually claim to be one of David's oldest fans and I don't mean by age. Those early works were very intriguing. At that time he was using lots of black which would later give way to water colors.

I introduced David to a fellow comic book creator Tom Kokenge and they worked on several issues of Vital-Man together. David also ran with another creation of mine titled Vapor Loch. Telling a compelling story of a man made vampire. All this time David was honing his skills in storytelling and developing an art style more and more on his own. He would do several other titles and other projects. Always pushing the envelope while working on his draftsmanship.

I first heard Dave talk about working on his own creation on our way back from a New York City comic convention. Back then we would pile into a little van and drive the 12 hours to New York. He mentioned several possible names and one that stuck for me was Kabuki. I knew very little about Japan except that they had made some very cool animation. But, soon David would begin educating us all within the stories of Kabuki.

I envy David's commitment to the comic book community. David is at most conventions talking about Kabuki and showing his latest beautiful paintings. If you enjoy Kabuki you have to see David's portfolio at the conventions. He always meets you with a smile and a handshake. Today we only see each other at conventions, even though he only lives 15 minutes from my studio, but it's always a joy to see and talk to him. He seems as excited

to be working in comics now as he was the day he showed up at my studio's front door.

Bob Hickey



Page 3 of Kabuki #8

This page is as much collage as painting. It is a point in the story where two time lines in a non linear story converge. I needed to find a visual atmosphere in which to form that junction. The first step was to map out the composition and decide what shapes and icons would join the ideas of the previous page with the action of the following page and integrate the shifts in time.

Then I used two different color copies of a pocket watch my father gave me when I was little. One side is in focus and one side is blurry. The aged paper burns away to reveal the graph paper and I collaged cogs and type through the panels and background images. My girlfriend Anh modeled for the figures which I first outlined in pen and then added quick color.



This is another page from Kabuki #8 in which two different scenes converge simultaneously. It is an example of a page that I needed to cut up and reassemble in a different form in order for it to gel. I collaged all the elements in a different order in different sizes until I found a solution.

The pattern on Siamese' dress is from a cloth sent to me from a Kabuki reader (Miss Furiko from the Zen institute). The last touch on the page was to rip three tiny pieces of a napkin (from Matsuya Restaurant as seen in Scarab) and glue one each to the hair of Siamese, and another overlapping the clock and Kabuki panel.



Page six from Kabuki One Half.

After I painted the two figures, I made a reduced color copy of them. Then I burnt the paper, added more paint, and collaged other paper and flower petals directly on the copy.

You always want to be in touch with those that can and will back you up.

Networking. The process of making contacts to further your future in business.

Written by Beau Smith

It applies to all sorts of business. Entertainment, construction, retail, wholesale, and even the world of comic books. I have to say that networking is how I got into the business over 14 years ago. My desires to get into this industry were a bit different from most. I wanted to get in on both the business end of comic book publishing AND on the creative end.

I was a journalism/marketing major in college. I had also been writing since high school. I knew where I wanted to go. Having your direction and goal is very important. It gives you guide lines to always refer to.

I began my networking in the early eighties. I used to buy on an average 12 comic books a week. The first thing I'd do is read the comic. Sit down and type out a letter of comment to the editor and assistant editor of the book.

I always included the assistant editor because nine times out of ten that is the person that truly reads and selects the letters that go into the comic book. The assistant editor is



also the FUTURE editor of tomorrow. It goes back to the old advice to treat everyone the same from the top of the ladder to the bottom. Let me tell you, I've seen the pecking order of the ladder go up and down like an elevator in my time. You always want to be in touch with those that can and will back you up.

I don't mean this to sound mercenary, it's business. The bottom of the boot is that you also can make some very good friends at the same time. That is a huge plus.

Getting back...I would write at least 12 letters of comment a week and tell the editors what I liked and didn't like about the issues. I advise you to make it constructive criticism. Make it entertaining. I always try to add some things that I would do creatively to the story. I would also add some marketing tips as well. Things that I had researched out.

This was something that worked out for me. In time editors would call and ask me to read books in advance and give commentary. It soon lead to face to face meetings at the conventions. They got a chance to place the face with the name....and to make myself better remembered by them I used all four of my names—Stephen Scott Beau Smith. That's the way I signed my letters. When I got to meet the editors they would always say "Hey! You're the guy with four names!" They remembered. That's what counts.

It was soon after that they asked me to submit some writing samples...that in turn led into writing jobs. At the same time I made a networking contact with Tim Truman who was doing a new book at Eclipse Comics called Scout. He and I found out that we shared some of the same likes and dislikes. We also found out that we are both from West Virginia. Needless to say, when Eclipse Comics needed a new Sales Manager Tim suggested that I apply. I did and I got the job. Six years later I was vice president of the company.

Here are some tips on networking in comics:

1. Through the mail, and email get yourself known to the people in the industry that you want to work for. Find your angle and prepare your path to get there. On the creative side learn who the editors are and what books they work on. Build a relationship with them via the mail and email. That way you don't seem pushy. they can deal with you on their own time and that makes them more receptive.

2. Know the assistant editors. Address mail to them personally. Don't send a submission or mention submissions right off the bat. Bring that up later...or even better let them bring it up. Talk to them about the characters and books that they work on. Tell them what directions you enjoy about it. Be subtle and tell them what you don't think is working and why.

Do some research with your local retailers and find out what is going on with those books in your area. Relay that info to the editor or if you are trying to get in on the business end relay that to the people on the sales and marketing end.

3. When you write them it never hurts to send little items to help them remember you. I was the sales administrator for an

audio/video chain in the early eighties. I would send some of the free T-shirts that our company made, or the little note pads, key rings, and sometimes free tapes that we got. This worked very well.

4. Find out their interests and cater to those interests. I found out that one editor was a Space Ghost fan. I grew up on the Space Ghost stuff myself and loved it. I had all of the old Space Ghost cartoons on tape ...so I dubbed them off and sent them to him. He never forgot that and I got lots of work out of it.

5. Most all of this applies to the business end as well. Get to know the players with the companies. Read up on what the sales and rankings of the books from all the companies and how they rate against each other. You will start to see trends and might even be able to shed some light on a way to improve sales for them. This would be a great door opening intro for you.

6. Go to as many conventions as you can afford to go to. This is where you meet the people face to face. if you have done some of the things that I have already talked about you will find that you will be greeted with a warmer hand than if not. You never know when you might get invited along to a dinner or lunch. That's when you can really get your foot in. If that happens I strongly suggest you sit and listen. See who is an alpha and who is a beta. Learn the personalities. Feel out who has power, who will have power and who will never have power. Only speak up with opinions or suggestions if asked or if you really know that it will go over.

7. If you are on the creative end get to know other writers, artists, and creative folks that are there doing the same thing you are. Get to know the guys in artist's alley and some of the smaller publishers and self publishers. Many tips and contacts can be made there. You can also partner up with an artist or writer to help make your package stronger. Teamwork is always better than trying to shovel the snow by yourself.

8. With the boom of the internet you can always get closer and make better contacts if you are setting up an online interview with a creator or business player. Every one loves to talk about themselves and this is just the way to make that contact. Even if you don't have a web site or work for one, you can always do the interview and send it out to people via email that share an interest in comics. Invading a little

privacy...yeah...kinda', but you will get the job done and more than likely they will enjoy the interview. You come out of it with a new contact and things are on their way.

The main thing that I am trying to get across to you is this.....there are no limits to the tactics that you can use to get into this business and get noticed. Use that fertile imagination and think grass roots. You don't need a ton of money to get it done. If you want it bad enough there are many ways to get it. Trust me...I've done and continue to do it everyday!

Remember....nobody is too big or too small. You can work em' all.

The Universe at Your Finger Tips Thoughts on Scripting Comic Books

by Tom Bierbaum

So you want to write comic books?

Well, here are a couple of handy tips:

- 1.) Don't. There are fewer and fewer jobs available every day for comic-book scripters, so already there are more good unemployed comic-book writers out there than assignments.
- 2.) Don't listen to me. If I really knew how to get scripting assignments, I wouldn't be a mostly unemployed comic-book writer these days, earning my living doing lots of things besides writing comic books.

Now, if you're still with me, you're either too dumb to take a hint or so driven to write comic books that you're willing to take on impossible obstacles and endless adversity. And since those happen to be two of the primary prerequisites for the job, you might as well read on...

In fact, there probably is very little future to comic-book writing as a career unless and until the business stops confining itself to that small and ever-shrinking smattering of fans who regularly walk into comic-book shops or visit comic-related websites. Fewer readers mean fewer comics, which means fewer writing assignments.

Of those assignments that will exist in the foreseeable future, most will go to people already in the business, or to artists and other creators who want to do the writing themselves, or to former editors who've been laid off because they, too, are faced with an ever-shrinking job market. And the few new writers who do break into the business will mostly be hired on at entry-level rates as a means of cutting expenses, meaning they're most likely going to be replaced a couple years down the road by the next crop of eager newcomers willing to work for even-lower entry-level rates.

So how do you enhance your chances of being among that select few to beat the odds and actually get some regular comic-writing work? Here are a few actual, helpful hints:

- 1.) Get a job, any job, at an established comic-book company. Many writers started out on staff serving some sort of apprenticeship, often as an assistant editor, but also working in the production department, proof-reading, working in marketing, emptying waste baskets, whatever. Such an entry-level job gives you the chance to learn the business and build relationships with the people you'll need to know to get the writing jobs.
- 2.) Get published. Editors have no time to read unsolicited submissions from prospective writers — sitting down and reading even one or two pages of text is taxing, tiresome and time-consuming, and editors have plenty of more pressing things to do with their time. But some of them won't be able to resist flipping through a good-looking, interesting comic book that lands on their desk, and if the writing in that comic impresses them, maybe you've cracked the door open a little bit with that editor.

More importantly, the only way to really learn how to write comic books

Stormquest #1 Plot

Here's a start on the plot of STORMQUEST #1, hurried out today just in case Greg gets through #0 before we return from the U.K and tend to all the things we'll have to do upon our return.

Note that we're doing much less here in terms of breaking things down panel by panel, in an effort to save time and keep these things less wordy. Greg, if you want us to go into more detail on anything, please give us a call.

As always, we urge you to consider the visuals here just suggestions to be taken with a grain of salt and your own expertise and preference guide you. Please feel

to her and she's sensually stroking
mythology (Hermes slew him and
tail of the peacock) who will learn
se he's not doing very well this
g their cards from Argus' many

ictorian garb.
oks like a very aged Scandinavian
beat Thor in wrestling and is
a her.

ethereal quality and a

is to do it. And by doing it on any level — cheap little xeroxed comics on folded over 8.5x11 paper is as good a place to start as any — you'll find out how good you are and how much you have to learn.

Keep working on whatever level you can until your work gets better and you can advance to that next level. Eventually, if you're good enough and persistent enough, you'll have something impressive to show the big boys that'll get their attention.

3.) Work with artists. This is an important part of #2. If you want your work published even on the most amateur level, you're going to have to either draw it yourself or find somebody else willing to draw it. So find aspiring artists at your local shops, conventions, among your buddies, in art classes, wherever. Remember that at some point, every great comic-book artist was some teen-ager dreaming of working as a professional artist someday, and the greats of tomorrow can be found among those dreaming about it today. If you develop a strong working relationship with these budding artists, they'll likely want to keep working with you as they establish themselves in the business.

Of course, most of the artists you hook up with won't make it to the big time either, but in the meantime, you'll be getting lots of experience at the important art of collaboration, learning how to mesh your talents with that of your artist to create a unique and truly entertaining package. And by spending lots of time working closely with artists, you'll get better and better at thinking visually, a necessary but sometimes difficult leap for any successful comic writer.

4.) Stow your ego at the door. Artists and editors are going to want to work with people they like to work with, and fighting to the death over every creative difference is not going to put you at the top of the Favorite-Collaborators list.

5.) Train yourself to be an idea factory. Put all your ideas down on paper (before they fade into the ether) and start challenging yourself to come up with more and more ideas to fit all sorts of potential creative needs. Once you get into a project, you'll find that most ideas you come up with don't quite work out for that given situation (for any number of reasons — somebody's already done it, they're going to do it next month, the character isn't available right now, the

character's been changed since last you've seen him, the editor was thinking of something different, etc., etc.).

What the business needs is somebody who can come up with good, workable alternative ideas immediately, and lots of them, since most of the alternative ideas are going to run into the same kinds of problems as the ideas they're trying to replace.

And as you build these lists of concepts, characters, storylines, villains, titles, etc., you'll not only be building up your creative muscles and confidence, you'll also be developing a stock of ideas for use when that big opportunity suddenly presents itself and some editor comes to you desperate for good ideas right now.

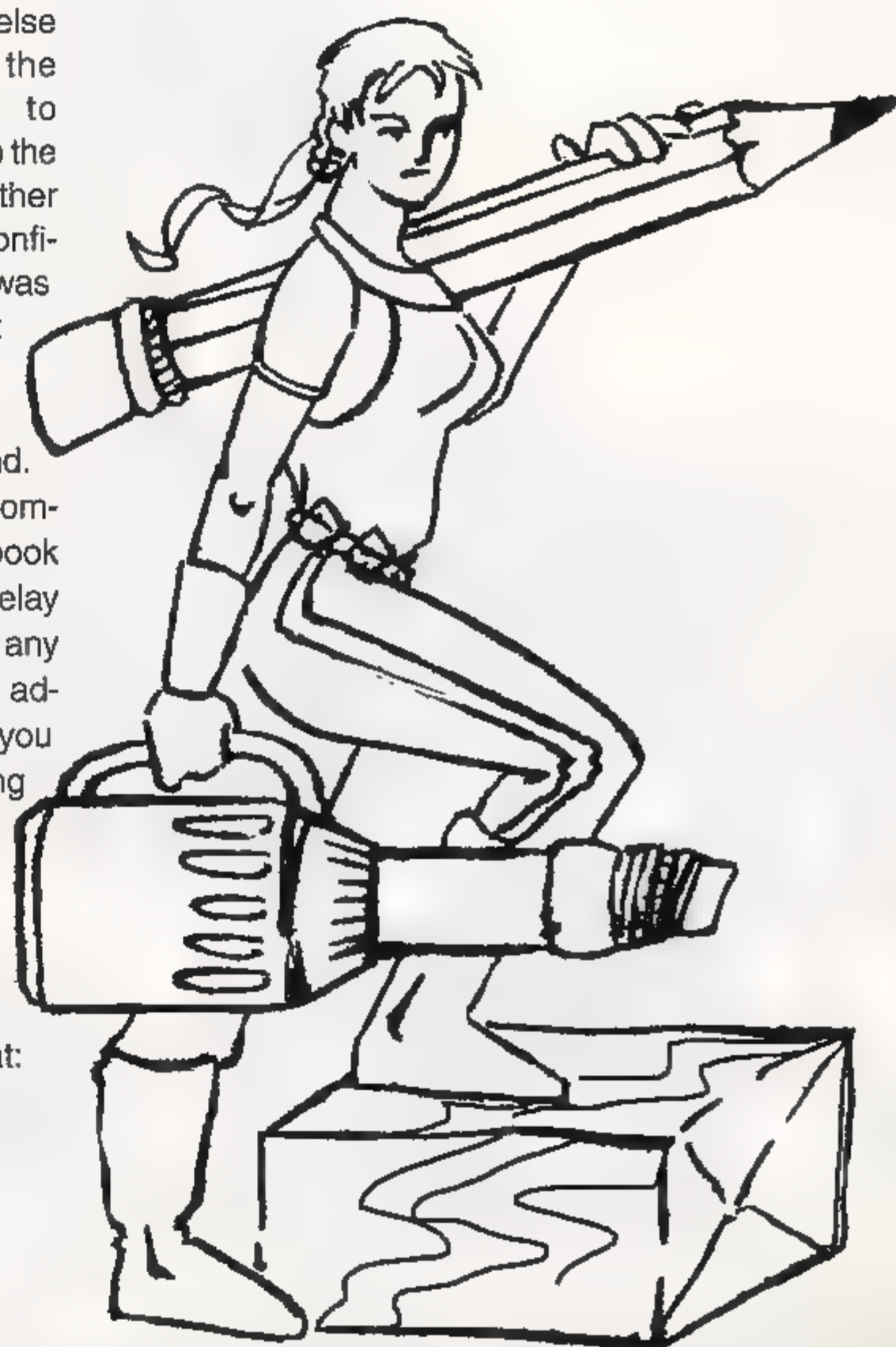
6.) Don't worry about anybody "stealing your ideas." If you're destined to make your living in comics or any other creative field, you're going to have hundreds more good creative ideas down the road, and the one or two you start out with aren't going to make or break you. And, believe it or not, most of the early ideas you come up with have already been thought of by somebody out there already, so what may feel like an idea that's been stolen from you is usually an idea that's occurred to plenty of other people by coincidence.


When some great idea of yours does unexpectedly pop up somewhere else (it's happened to everyone in the business, believe me), try to be philosophical about it. Move on to the business of developing all your other great ideas with the added bit of confidence that one of your ideas really was good enough to get published — not by you this time, but good enough nonetheless.

Guess that's it for my first go-round. Next time I'll try to address some common beginners' mistakes for comic-book scripters. In the meantime, please relay to the kind folks at Sketch Magazine any questions or topics you'd like to see addressed in future columns, since (as you might sense) it's a little difficult getting a handle on exactly what kind of information might be of greatest interest to prospective scripters.

Hope to hear from you.

Tom Bierbaum can be reached at:
tomb@bluelinepro.com





by
Joe Corroney

Drawing Dynamic Figures for Comic Books

So you want to learn the ways of the comic book and become a penciler like Jack Kirby before you? Well, strap yourselves in as we prepare to make the jump to lightspeed and take a crash course in penciling. Before you set out to conquer this creative and exciting yet technically challenging medium, you must have an appreciation and a basic understanding of what makes comic books so fascinating.

There are many aspects one must learn about the art of comics before becoming successful at drawing them. It takes discipline, determination, an open mind to criticism and suggestion, a basic artistic sense or an eye for knowing what looks right (or wrong), and a whole lot of rejection letters (well, hopefully not too many). You'll need to experience all of these before you'll have the talent, skills, and luck needed to make a living at this craft.

Ask yourself, *what is it that all comic books have in common? What is the one thing that shows up in every comic book you read?* The answer is people. Comic book stories are about people, not always just ordinary ones but extraordinary, dynamic characters. Whether they are superheroes, aliens, hard-boiled detectives, or regular civilians, these dynamic characters are the primary focus of any good comic book we read. And it's these dynamic characters the storytellers create in hopes of their reader identifying with. As a penciler, you are in fact a storyteller and it's your job to create these dynamic characters visually by drawing them.

To be able to draw comic books, not only do you have to make your characters convincing with proper anatomy and exciting with cool costumes and dynamic poses, but you also have to draw everything else in the entire world and draw them just as well. This includes buildings, cars, animals, flowers, telephones, etc. Sound difficult? Not really. That's because the hu-



man figure is the most complex machine on the planet and is the most difficult to master in terms of drawing. Once you are able to draw the human form well and believably, you will find you will be able to draw anything. Thus it's this first aspect of penciling that we will focus on. We'll learn how to properly and creatively draw dynamic characters.

WEAPONS OF MASS CREATION

First off we'll need some drawing supplies right? If you are going to take comic book penciling seriously we'll need to arm ourselves with the proper weapons. Any pencil or paper will do and these will be your sword and your shield. But any smart artist has more than one weapon in his arsenal, so to speak. Just as you learn to master the craft of drawing comic books, you'll need a variety of supplies for each task at hand. For figure drawing, and drawing characters in comic books, I use the following supplies.

- 1) Non-photo blue pencils
- 2) 2H and HB pencils
- 3) Mechanical pencils (0.3, 0.5, and a Staedtler Mars 780-my preference)
- 4) Erasers (plastic and kneaded)
- 5) Sketchbook
- 6) 2ply Bristol Board (Blue Line Strathmore 11 x 17 inches)
- 7) Photo reference (if required)
- 8) Lightbox (for transferring your sketches/layouts to your drawing paper/bristol board)
- 9) Artists tape (for holding down your paper/bristol to your lightbox)
- 10) Ruler (necessary for constructing panels on the page that contain your characters)

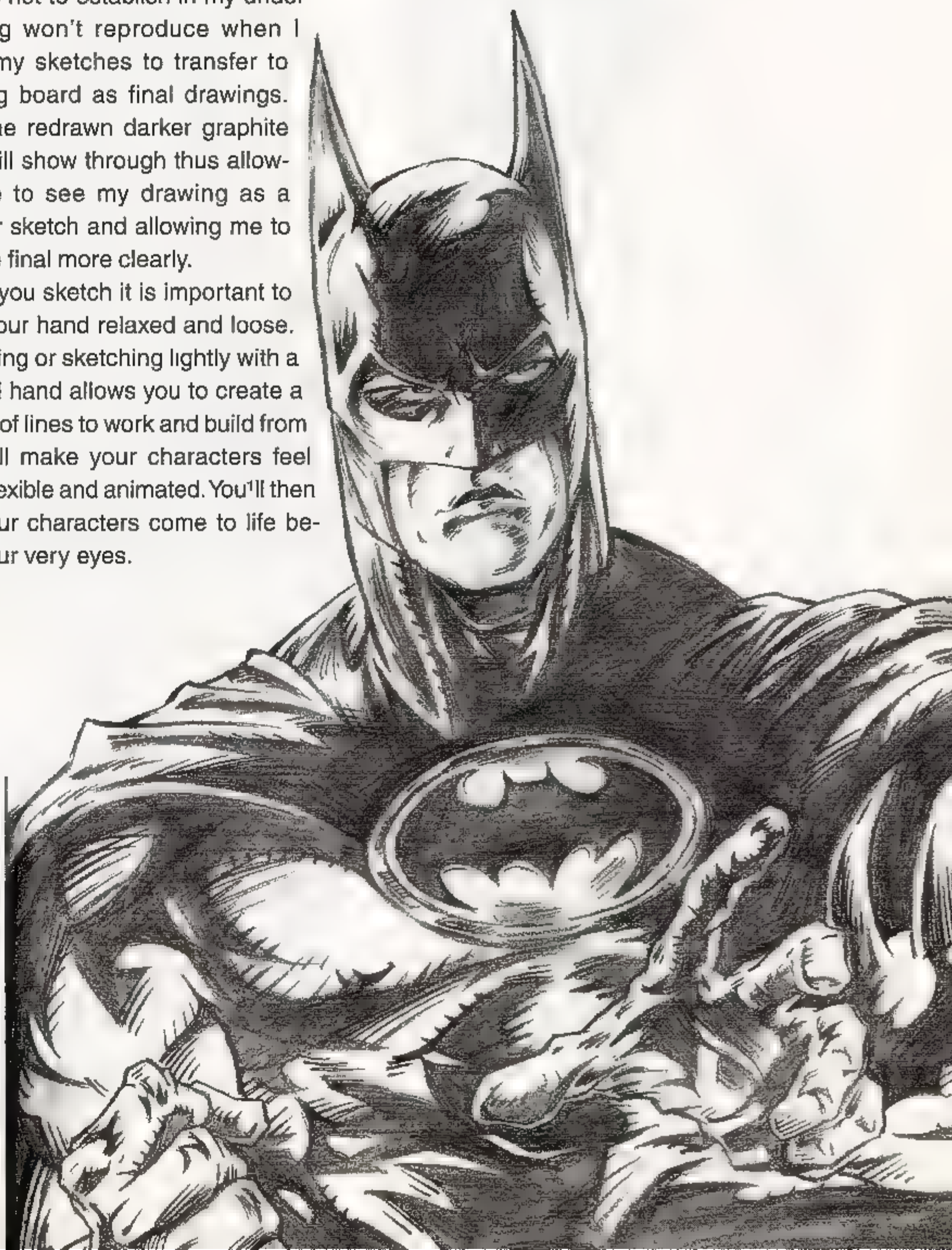
SKETCH OR SKETCH NOT, THERE IS NO TRY...

Practice sketching in your sketchbook everyday. The sketchbook is your personal bible, it's your diary, your conscience and your subconscious, and it's your best friend. Take it wherever you go and try to draw at least something in it every day. These are the basic calisthenics you'll need to practice every day in order to advance your skills as an artist and in mastering drawing comic books.

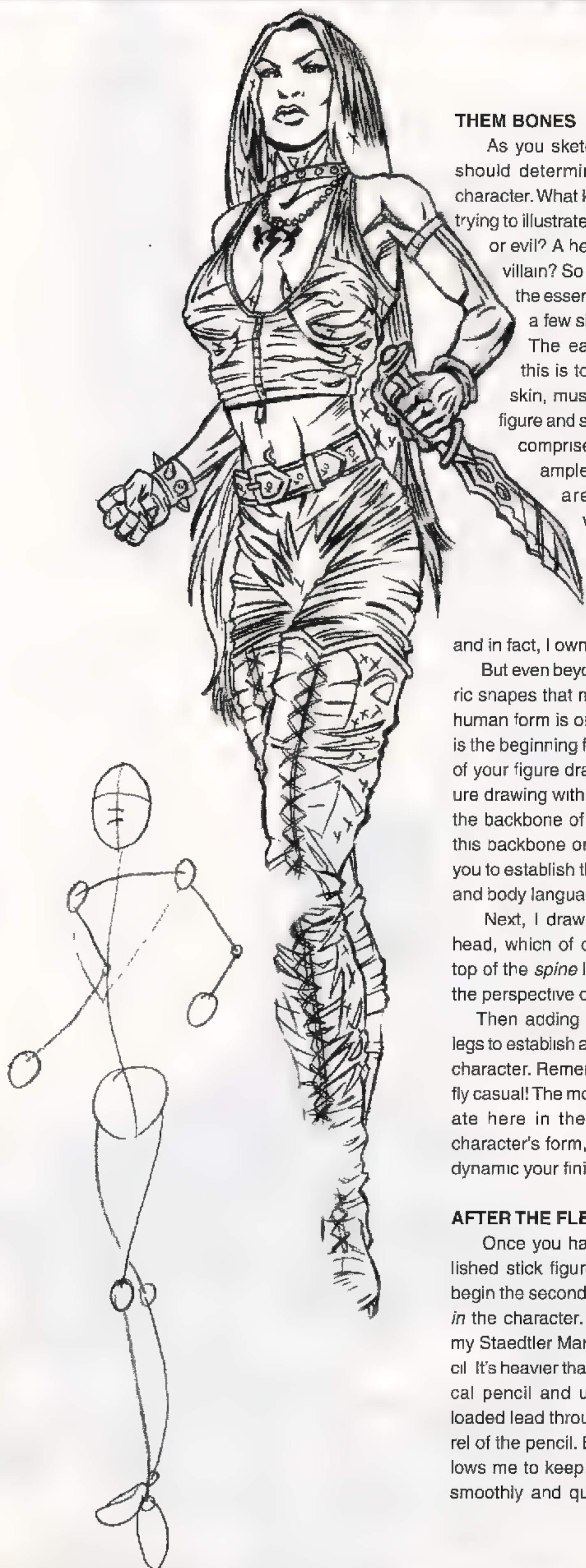
DRAWING THE FIGURE PART ONE

Do not try to draw the final figure completely and all at once. Every good figure drawing, like every good story, is made up of many layers and appears more simpler than those complex layers that we can't see and which gives it depth. I begin sketching characters as stick figures and simple geometric shapes with non-photo blue pencil. Non-photo blue pencils are waxier-type pencils that I use for laying down my initial framework that serves as the basis for my drawing. I work with these types of pencils primarily at first since I can work back on top of these blue lines adding another layer with regular pencil. I pick and pull out the blue lines I like that define my form by tracing over them with regular graphite pencil or mechanical pencils. The blue lines I choose not to establish in my under-drawing won't reproduce when I xerox my sketches to transfer to drawing board as final drawings. Only the redrawn darker graphite lines will show through thus allowing me to see my drawing as a cleaner sketch and allowing me to see the final more clearly.

As you sketch it is important to keep your hand relaxed and loose. Scribbling or sketching lightly with a relaxed hand allows you to create a variety of lines to work and build from and will make your characters feel more flexible and animated. You'll then see your characters come to life before your very eyes.



Batman copyright DC Comics



THEM BONES

As you sketch your characters you should determine the essence of the character. What kind of character are you trying to illustrate? Male or female? Good or evil? A heroic pose or a cowardly villain? So much can be said about the essence of figure drawing with a few simple lines and shapes. The easiest way to establish this is to look past the clothing, skin, muscles, and bones of any figure and see the basic shapes that comprise the form. A good example of what I'm referring to are those bendable, wooden mannequins you can buy at any art supply store. They are very handy to have around for reference and in fact, I own one myself.

But even beyond those basic geometric shapes that make up the essence of human form is one simple line. This line is the beginning for creating the essence of your figure drawing. I begin every figure drawing with this line and its literally the backbone of my character. Drawing this backbone or center line first allows you to establish the posture, personality, and body language for your character.

Next, I draw an oval shape for the head, which of course is placed at the top of the *spine* line and helps establish the perspective of your figure.

Then adding lines for the arms and legs to establish action and height for your character. Remember, keep it loose and fly casual! The more flexible lines you create here in the infrastructure of the character's form, the more realistic and dynamic your finished drawing will be.

AFTER THE FLESH

Once you have sketched an established stick figure or mannequin, you'll begin the second layer that I call *fleshing* in the character. This is when I pick up my Staedtler Mars 780 mechanical pencil. It's heavier than your regular mechanical pencil and uses a thicker, spring-loaded lead through the front of the barrel of the pencil. But this drawing tool allows me to keep my sketch loose more smoothly and quickly than an average

mechanical pencil and work from a variety of thick and thin line weights whether the tip of the lead is sharp or dull. You will also need a graphite sharpener that usually comes with this mechanical pencil when you purchase one.

In this second layer I add more shapes to my stick figure and build upon my initial drawn geometric shapes with more defined anatomical forms and edges. This gives my figure weight, dimension, and depth. I'm drawing on top of my non-photo blue lines choosing which lines I want to keep and those I don't want to define and making my drawing more complete.

HANDS ALL OVER

Now, in the third layer I use my regular 0.5 mechanical pencil to add details such as hands and feet.

Hands are a great storytelling device if rendered correctly, can help convey your character's body language. I use the 0.5 pencil to refine my anatomical structure and add shading which gives my anatomy form. Even the simplest of line styles should have some sense of light and dark. Whether you choose to just use thicker line weights along the edges of the body or clothing to signify a light source or depth (ex. Geof Darrow's style) or if you think more graphically and use heavy darks and black shapes to create light and shadow on your forms (ex. Mike Mignola's style).

I approach every comic page, not just drawing figures, in this method and once I have built up my drawing to this point, I make a xerox of my sketch or page layout and transfer it to a fresh sheet of Bristol Board using my lightbox and my 0.5 mechanical pencil. I also use my 0.3 mechanical pencil to draw details such as facial expressions, hair, smaller textures, and parts of the clothing or costumes after I transferred my rough sketch to Bristol. Especially if I happen to be drawing a character in a smaller comic pane on the page. This allows me to finalize my drawing and gets rid of the messy blue pencil I used and other scribbles in my original sketch I made by retracing my drawing and making it look very sharp, clean, and professional.

DYNAMIC FIGURE DRAWING IN THREE STEPS



A.

I begin my character sketches with the spine or backbone line. If you notice this is the thicker line in the sketch that I have drawn. I start at where would be the base of the skull and draw a line to the tailbone area. I am representing the center axis of my figure and drawing the line loose and fluid resembling a flexible backbone. I then add an oval shape for the head of my character and a 'crossbar' to represent the shoulders. I then add more fluid lines to represent the motion and movement of the arms and hands.

Before I add lines for the legs, I create an circular shape for the pelvis and position it towards the bottom of my 'spine' line. For a woman character I make this pelvis shape more round and circular than a man's which I tend to draw more oval. Keeping this in mind early on in my initial sketch will allow my female figure to keep the 'hourglass' shape I want for her in my final sketch. I then add lines for the legs and feet. Notice I am placing small circles indicating the knee, wrist, elbow, ankle, hips, and shoulder joints. These are sometimes necessary in allowing me to keep my proportions consistent in relation to each other throughout my figure. My final 'bone' structure sketch resembles a wireframe mannequin I can build my character from.



B.

In this second level of my figure drawing, I begin 'fleshing in' the character. In this stage my character begins to take complete shape, weight, and height. I add basic cylindrical shapes around my wireframe sketch. This gives the arms, legs, and torso dimension and weight. I add details in the area for the hands and face, indicating the spacing between the mouth, nose, and eyes with smaller lines cutting into the oval head shape. I begin to think about the overall form of my character's shape including drawing the basic shapes for her hair and costume. The more I consider and visualize ahead of time, the less work I may need to do in rendering all of her anatomy. When considering costume design (and/or surrounding environment in a comic panel), this allows me to cut corners and concentrate on the overall design of the character without getting caught up in every anatomical detail. Still, I need to keep my figure drawing loose and flexible here, which lets my character feel animated and alive.



C.

Finally, I render my character complete with overall detail for the face, hands, hair, costume, and her blaster pistol. I pay attention to line weights here, drawing darker over interior and exterior edges and lines in the sketch that I want to keep and redefine. This gives the forms of the character depth and more dimension. By keeping my initial sketch loose, I can work very tight with details in this stage and still keep my character fluid and animated. The character finally comes to life and takes on a personality of her own.

WOW!
DYNAMIC FIGURE
DRAWING AT IT'S
BEST!



DRAWING THE FIGURE PART TWO

In this section, we are going to look at the differences between drawing male and female comic book characters and study the basic anatomy of each. Now that we established a figure drawing technique we need to know a thing or two about the differences and subtleties that make a generic figure drawing more dynamic. The whole point of creating dynamic figures in the first place is to make the comic books we love to read and draw that much more interesting. Like movies, comic books are pure escapism and visually we want to be impressed and astounded with what we normally can't see or experience in our everyday lives. Comic books and their characters are exciting because they are an exaggeration of real life.

To learn how to make comic books exciting we must first learn how to exaggerate our figures. To over-exaggerate in cartooning is necessary to not only develop a unique, often times commercially pleasing style, but to make our storytelling more dramatic. Over-exaggerating the anatomy, body language,



and action will make your characters seem more heroic, interesting, and larger than life. But it is also a fine line not to take too many liberties and over-exaggerate too much thus distorting your figures and making your style too abstract or displeasing. You will find this balance in your style with practice, time, and patience.

ANATOMY OF A SUPERHERO

The average male figure in real life is about six and a half head heights tall. When dealing with male figures in comic books we need to make them appear taller, larger, and more dynamic especially if we are illustrating a hero like Batman. A standard rule of thumb I follow is to make my heroes and villains about eight and three quarter head heights. Unless of course we have a smaller character like Wolverine or the Atom in which case we make obvious adjustments. Even less superhero-ish characters or even villains like Darth Maul can be given an exaggerated sense of style to make them more dynamic. Often times when drawing dynamic male comic book characters you should make the shoulders wider, the hips more narrow, the chest and arms broader, and overall more angular than your average male figure.

You can use the same height scale for drawing dynamic comic book women as well. In fact even fashion designers

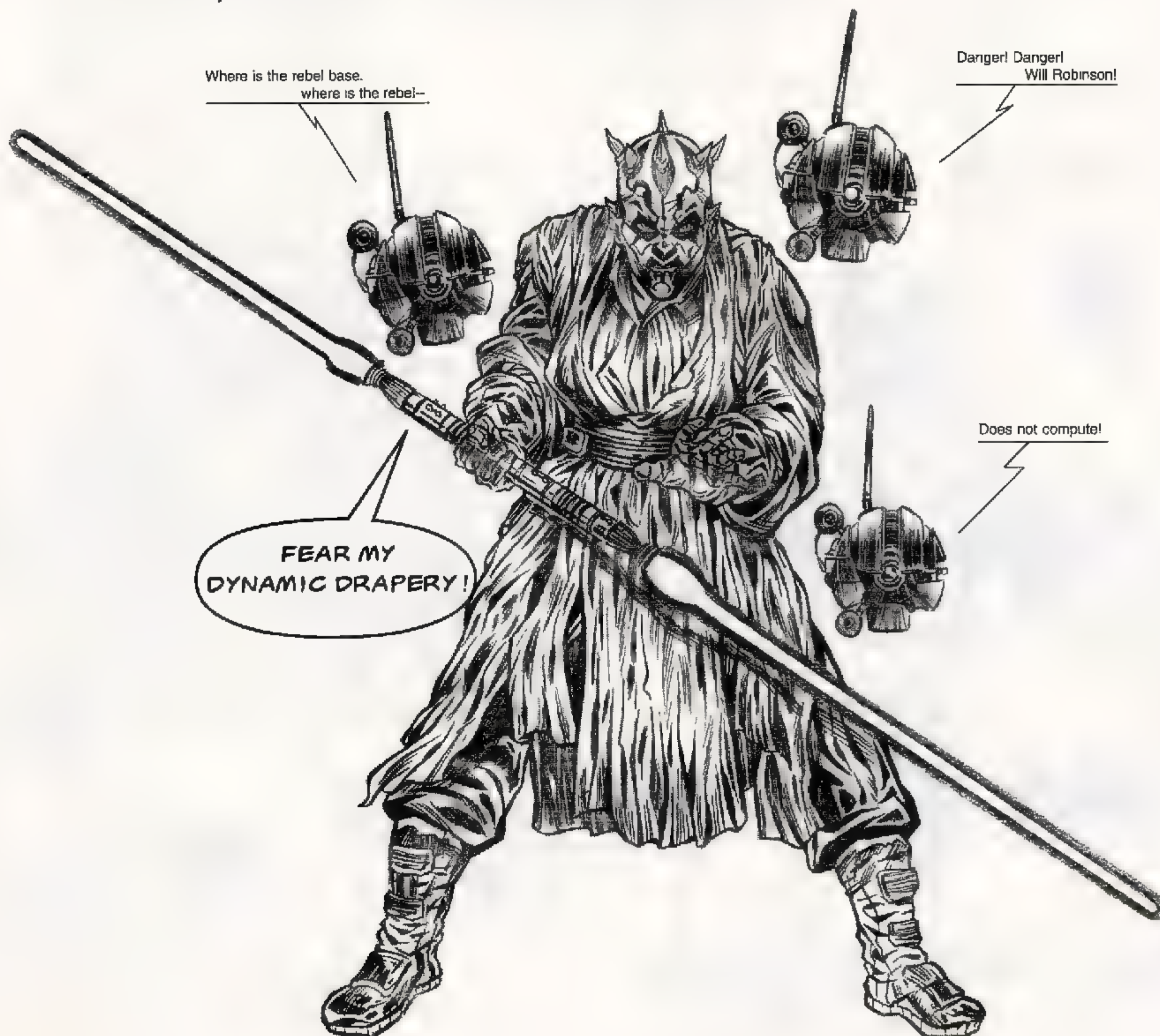
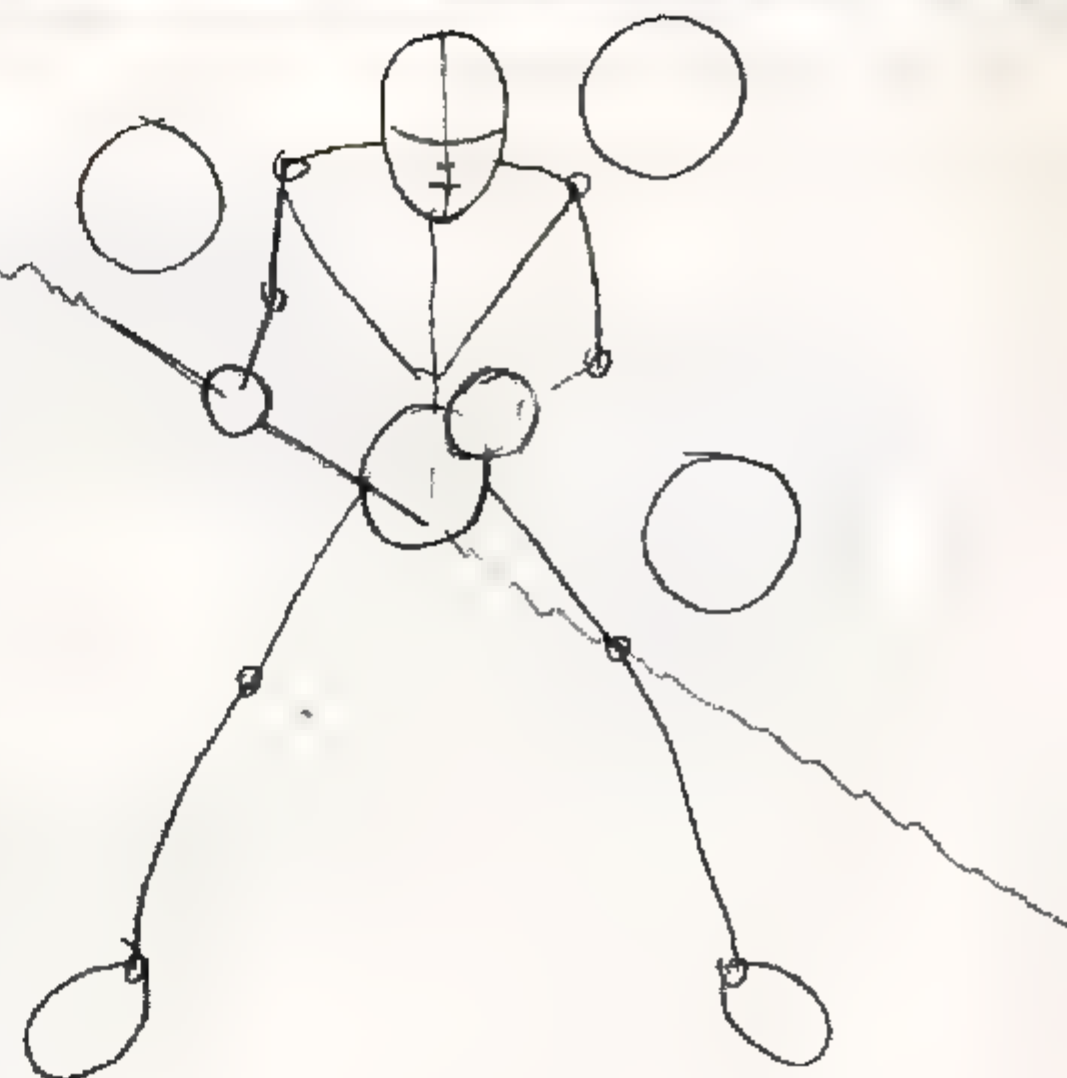



use a similar scale when drawing their clothes on super-model-type drawings. Women have wider hips, slightly smaller heads, and less angular, softer anatomy. When drawing women you must remember to keep them soft, smooth, and full of curves. The most important rule to remember in drawing comic book women, even entire comic books themselves, is that less is more! The less lines you draw on their anatomy, especially their faces and hands, the more appealing these characters will be (especially to your average, pubescent, thirteen year old Lady Death reader). When drawing both male and female figures also note that hands on each fall mid-thigh down their sides and elbows fall just below the waist.

Remember, keep your sketchings loose and original. Photo reference is fine when you are going for correct anatomy but try not to rely on it too heavily. Keep your characters from getting too stiff and posed looking like swimsuit pin-ups and muscle magazine body builders.

MOOD FOR TROUBLE

Just as we over-exaggerate anatomy to create dynamic figures, we also need to exaggerate the mood, body language, and action with our characters. Comic characters are often over the top in terms of their style, personality, and movements. Again this makes them more appealing, interesting, and exciting to read and look at. By amplifying the expression





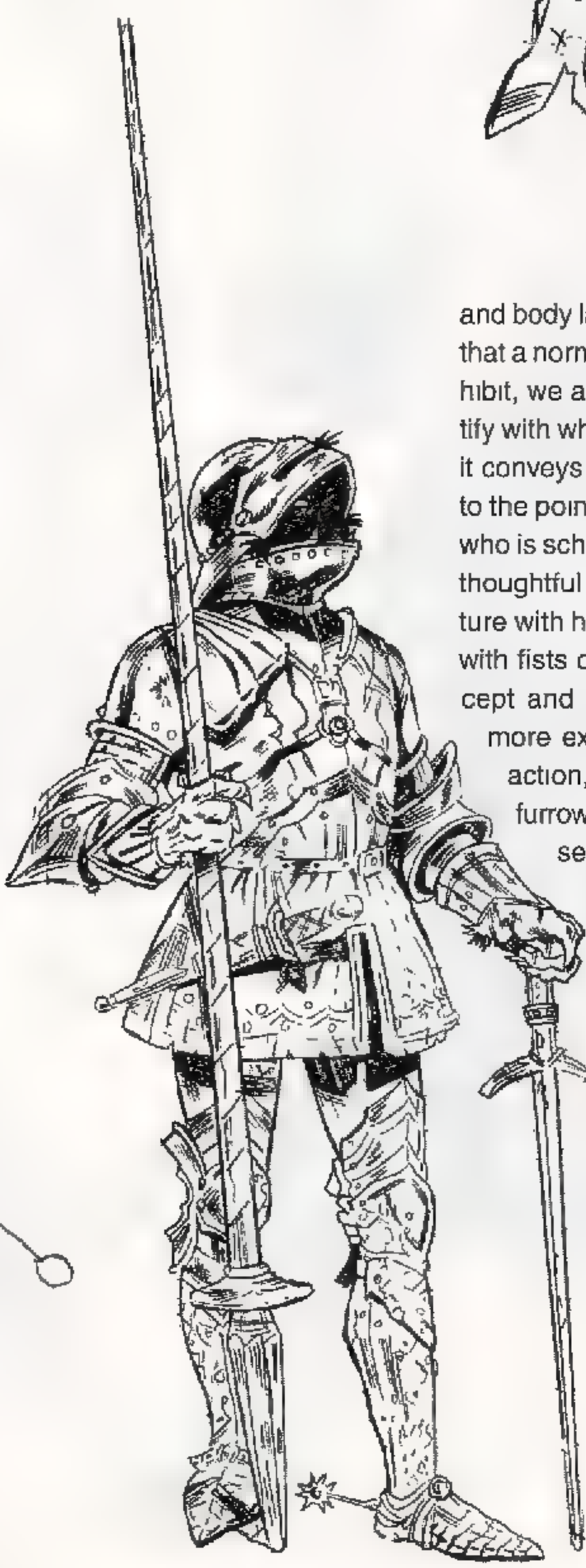
I'M NOT
PURRRR-FECT...
I'M JUST DRAWN
THIS WAY!

NO HOLDS BARRED

Action! The final ingredient in making your characters sing with that extra zip Action is often the bread and butter of many a comic. It keeps the pace of the story moving along and allows our characters to, as Logan would say, *do what they do best*. It's dynamic characters in action that make comic books so enjoyable, and again exaggeration is important. With exaggeration, you can turn a character's wimpy left hook into a bone-crushing roundhouse. A weak side-kick can be redrawn with devastating impact. Characters that skip down the sidewalk are nowhere near as impressive as those who can leap over buildings in a single bound. It's all in how flexible and powerful you render your characters. To exaggerate action, keep your sketch loose and try to nail the motion and movement of your characters in the first few lines you draw, especially the backbone or center line, in the first layer of your figure drawing. Always keep realism in mind and even the most exaggerated positions and actions your character makes will seem believable.

NOW A WORD FROM OUR SPONSORS...

For more guidance on this topic, I recommend you pick up a copy of any good anatomy book. *Dynamic Figure Drawing* by Burne Hogarth and *Constructive Anatomy* by George Bridgeman are books I use. Another great resource is *How to Draw Comics the Marvel Way* by Stan Lee and John Buscema. Also make sure you draw every day! Draw from life, from photo reference, and most importantly from your imagination. This is the key in creating dynamic characters for comic books. Good luck and have fun!



and body language for a comic character that a normal every day person would exhibit, we allow the reader to easily identify with what our character is feeling and it conveys mood and drama much more to the point. An example may be a villain who is scheming his next plan by looking thoughtful and standing with perfect posture with his hands at his sides, perhaps with fists clenched. Take the same concept and exaggerate it. Make a villain more expressive by giving his hands action, his back hunched, his brow furrowed, and his eyes shifting. You'll see how much more successful and how much more alive with personality your characters will be.

While thinking of the desired body language in mind while sketching your characters, you will be able to allow them to emote with feeling and action much more clearly. They will feel more alive and carry the desired mood you are trying to convey more successfully.

You can view online galleries of
Joe's published and unpublished Star Wars art
at the following websites.
<http://www.theforce.net/museum/jcorroney/>
<http://www.echostation.com/interview/corroney.htm>
<http://downtime.echostation.com/fanart/jcorroney.html>
and <http://www.rebelpilots.com/>

Feel free to contact Joe at
jcorroney@earthlink.net



columns

comics

news

contests

boards

classifieds

resources

free stuff

links directory

Cool!!



WORLD FAMOUS
COMICS
THE ULTIMATE COMIC BOOK AND ENTERTAINMENT WEBSITE!

UPDATED DAILY!

WWW.WFCOMICS.COM

WORLD FAMOUS COMICS AND RELATED MATERIAL © &™ WORLD FAMOUS COMICS



by
Dan Davis

What does an inker do?
Don't start the way I started—Do it right!
The most underrated “secret” — Good Paper!
All inks are not created equal!
Pens vs. Brushes- Why not both?
What about markers?
Correcting mistakes—or—“When in doubt white it out”!

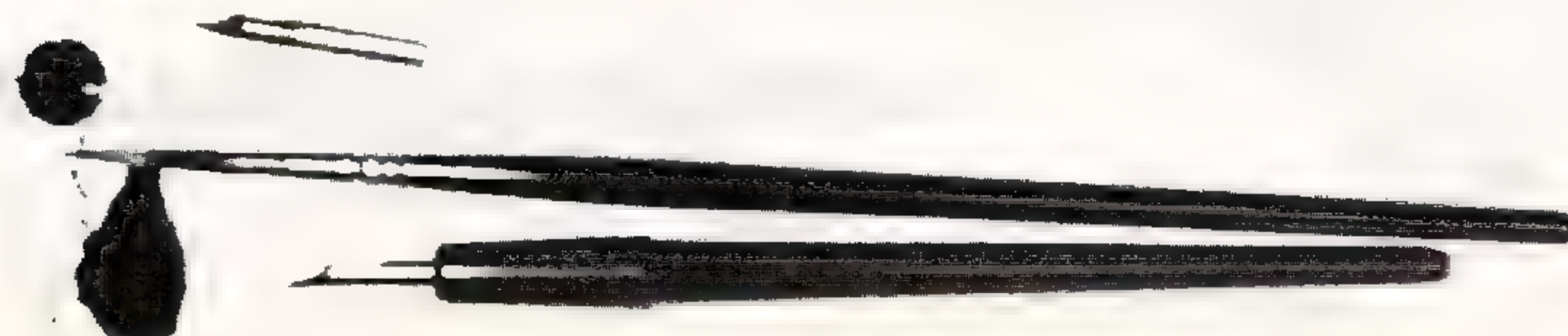
Inking the Comics: The Basics

Finally...
What does an inker do?

That's the most common question I'm asked and it's sometimes difficult to explain, but let's keep it simple. All the sharp black lines you see in comics are drawn by an inker with pen, brush, or marker. Comics are inked because black india ink reproduces better than pencil art when the work is printed. Inkers follow what the pencil artist has drawn on the page, but also add clarity and style to the art. That's why you just can't trace over the pencil art. I often say that I draw the page again one final time in ink, and then clean it up by erasing the pencils underneath. Good inking has a confidence to it that only comes from mastering the tools that the inker uses.

The art to the cover of *Stars and S.T.R.I.P.E.* #1 from DC Comics is shown here. Lee Moder provides some of the cleanest pencils in comics and I'm the lucky guy that gets to ink over him. I've worked with artists that have a much looser and rougher style than Lee's and sometimes I have to turn a pencil smudge into a hand, but Lee makes it easy and really puts in all the detail. I can relax and have fun with his style and just add some crispness to the linework and something that we call “line variation”. Basically that refers to lines going from thick to thin such as varying the thickness in the Star Spangled Kid's hair or S.T.R.I.P.E.'s contour or outlines. By varying the line weight I can make the drawing clearer and more interesting.

In general things that are closer to the “camera” or viewer have thicker lines and things in the background thin out a bit. I could talk a lot more about some of these inking theories, but let's start with the basics and the second most common question I'm asked...What kinds of materials do you use?



Don't start the way I started— Do it Right!

I still remember my first attempts at inking. I was doing almost everything wrong! Somehow I knew cartoonists used a thick paper, but since I didn't have any and didn't live near an art store, I actually tried to use a thin white cardboard that some food had come wrapped in! Of course I think it had some oil on it also and you can guess that it did not take an ink line very well. I was also trying to use some of my grandmother's old fountain dip pens and a bottle of her writing ink and they were not user friendly. Dime store brushes were not the kind the pros used either as I sadly found out trying to make a thin sharp line with a brush that spread out like a cleaning mop.

The results were disastrous and it took years of trial and error to figure out how to do it right. That was a long time ago (sometime in the last millennium), and fortunately now there are great how-to magazines like this one to help you avoid the mistakes I made.

The most underrated secret— good paper!

I really feel that you have to start with a good two-ply drawing paper that accepts ink well. Blue Line really has a range of good papers to use and they are all neatly cut to standard sizes with the blue line borders drawn in for good measure. A two-ply bristol board drawing paper from an art supplier holds up well for pencil drawing and won't be destroyed by a lot of erasing that can wear out cheaper papers. You don't want the paper ruined before you even get a chance to start inking!

When the ink touches the paper it should go where you want it to. That may sound obvious, but cheap papers absorb india ink like a sponge and the nice sharp line you wanted "bleeds" out in all directions and looks ragged and rough. Good paper will accept even the tiniest cross-hatching lines and hold them where you want them.

One of the most frustrating jobs I had was inking a job with paper supplied from a large comics company that should have known better. The minute I touched my crowquill pen to the page the paper fibers

would tear up and clog my pen point. It robbed me of using my favorite inking tool and the whole job suffered.

All inks are not created equal.

I like Higgins Black Magic India Ink even though sometimes the thickness of the ink varies when it arrives in the bottle. Ink should flow freely off your pen point and out of your brush and still be a solid dark black even after you've erased the pencils underneath it. Believe me some pencil artists must think they are doing wood etchings as hard as they like to press into the paper. It takes a lot of erasing to remove their dark pencils and that will sometimes "gray" the ink lines which will reproduce poorly.



Original size of finished artwork.

Ink should be a little thicker for brushwork and thinner for pen points so that's why I finally put two bottles on my drawing board instead of trying to make one do for both. I tape down two 35mm film vials to my table and fill them with just enough ink so that when I tap in my pen or dip in my brush I always get just the right amount. It also makes it easier to thin the pen ink by adding a couple of drops of water or leave the cap off the brush ink and let it "thicken up" a little.

If you make a stroke with your pen and no ink comes off onto the paper, chances are the ink could stand some thinning out. Likewise if you lay down a brush line that looks more like a "dry brush" technique of shading than a solid black line, your

brush ink is probably too thick and needs some thinning. If your brushwork erases away and looks gray, than your ink is probably too thin for a brush

Pen vs. Brush—Why not both?

Why be labeled as a "pen artist" or a "brush guy", when with a little bit of effort you can learn to use both? That might just double the kinds of jobs you'll be considered for! I mix the two up on almost every page no matter what the pencil style. However most styles lean more in one direction or the other and you have to get a feel for which to use where. The cartoony type of work I do like Scooby-Doo which has thick bold curvy lines cries out for a brush. Detailed drawing with an angular style calls for more pen use. On STARS and S.T.R.I.P.E., Lee Moder has a kind of animated style that combines fine detail with long curvy lines and I try to switch tools to get the best look.

The pen points I like are the popular Hunt 102 crowquill tip. A tricky thing to get started with, but probably is used by most pro inkers. You can't draw with it like a pencil and change directions immediately. If you try, you'll splatter ink everywhere! You must change the angle of the pen point just right so you can make a sweeping confident line. Sometimes even turning the point upside down!

This might be a good place to mention that I never tape my paper down and use a T-square and triangle the way they taught me to do in shop class. In comics the action flies in every direction and I'm spinning the page 360 degrees all over my table to get the right angle for the right line!

The brush I like is a Windsor-Newton Series 7 #2. I can get tiny detail out of it or thick bold lines that I really favor. Some use a #3 and it's really up to your personal preference. They aren't cheap, but if you regularly wash it with mild soap and lukewarm water they sometimes last up to a year.

Often there is an uneven hair or two that makes it hard to get a nice point on your brush. Under a magnifying glass I'll take an exacto blade and just nip off the end of that one hair. It is better to be very cautious when doing this or you'll ruin an expensive brush, so go slow.



Original pencils by Lee Moder for Stars and Stripes #1.

What about markers?

I see a lot of samples from people who use markers, because "they just can't get the hang of brushes and pens". Markers have their usefulness, but I truly believe those would be artists just didn't get past that "learning curve" of using pens and brushes, and I usually advise them to try again. The complaint about markers is that they bleed, and fade, and either don't make a crisp enough line, or that they are never "black" enough.

Personally I like markers and the technology has improved immensely over the years. There are now "brush" markers that can even simulate a thick to thin line and they are darn convenient because they dry immediately and you can work faster with them. I use Penstix Black India Ink markers for drawing circles and ellipses with templates and they work just fine. Sometimes I'll fill in black areas with a Sharpie instead of india ink, again for the convenience.

There is so much style that comes from using a real pen and brush, that you are shortchanging yourself if you try to duplicate that style by only using markers. However markers can certainly be used as an aid in getting the job done and almost everybody uses them to some extent.

Correcting Mistakes—or— "When in doubt...white it out!"

Ink corrections are really no problem. Some people use ink erasers, but I never have. I just "paint" over the problems with a #1 brush and Pelikan Graphic White, a bottled white liquid that sometimes needs thinned with water.

Inking over the whited out part is more of a problem. First be sure the whiteout has dried completely. Then a fine point marker or a brush with india ink might work better than a crowquill pen as the latter has a tendency to scratch off the whiteout.

The quote above, "When in doubt...white it out!" is attributed to the late, great, comic book artist Wally Wood. It is sometimes quoted as "...black it out!" or "leave it out!", who really knows? But in any form it's good advice. It simply means if something catches your eye and



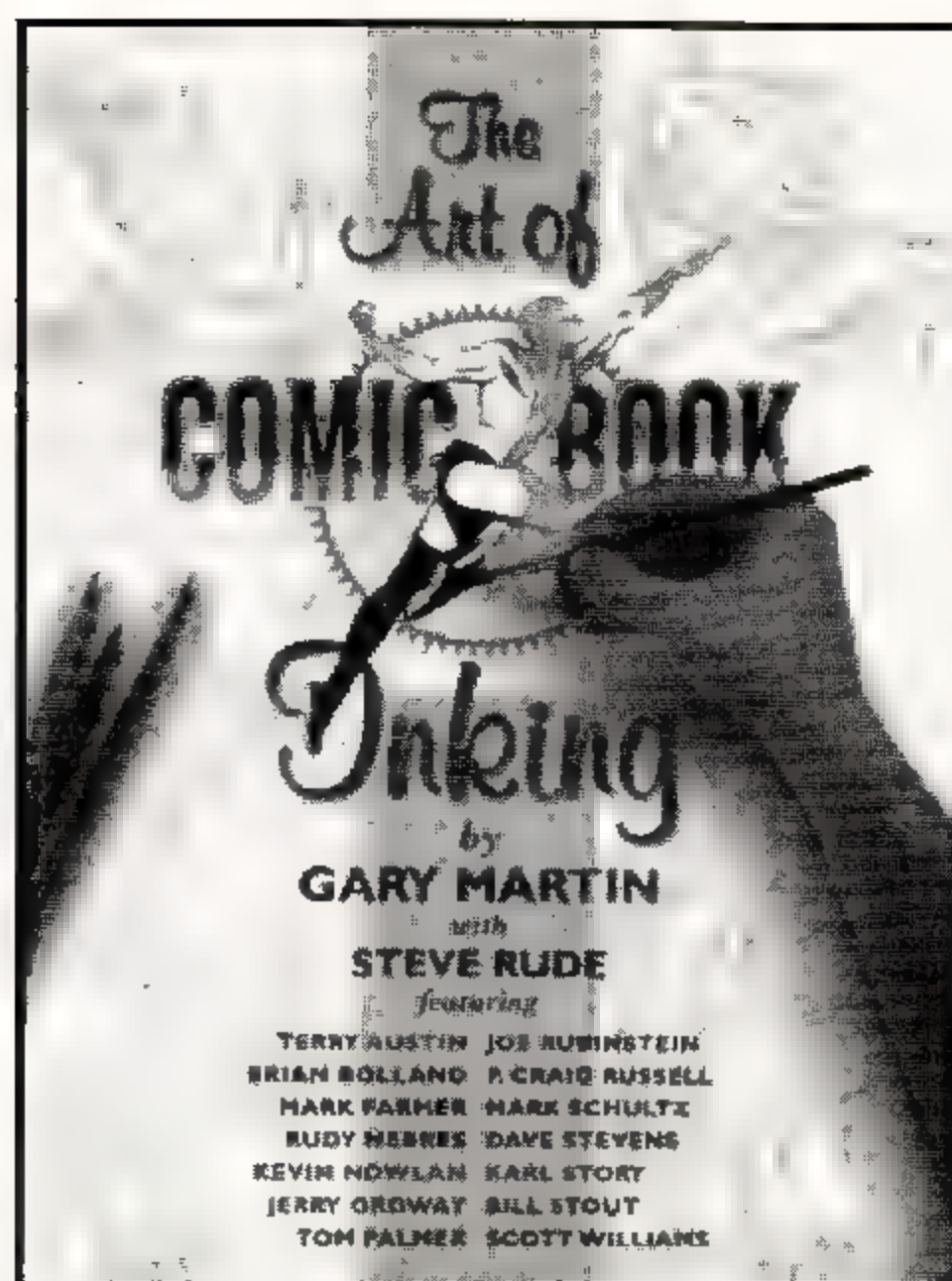
Finished cover pencils by Lee Moder with inks by Dan Davis.

you think it may be wrong, it probably is, so get rid of it!

Finally...

All the materials I use are just suggestions and everyone has their favorites. Try 'em all, I say, and use what you like and throw out the rest. The most important thing is to "think ink"! Don't just copy what the pencil artist has drawn, but think about the fact that you are drawing in ink and use the medium to its fullest! All people really see is the inked art as the pencils are erased anyway...so leave a good impression!

Contact Dan Davis at
dand@bluelinepro.com



The Art of Comic Book Inking

by Gary Martin with Steve Rude.

Published by Dark Horse Comics.

For aspiring and untrained professional inkers, pencillers who want to be more inker-friendly, comic-book editors, or just anyone interested in **The Art of Comic-Book Inking**.

The above text is printed on the back cover of this book and that just about sums up this book. If you're interested in inking comic books then this book would be very beneficial to you. It's filled with beautiful illustration by Steve (Nexus) Rude. And has inking samples over Rude's pencils by such inking greats as Terry Austin, Brian Bolland, Mark Farmer, Rudy Nebres, Kevin Nowlan, Jerry Ordway, Tom Palmer, Joe Rubinstein, P. Craig Russell, Mark Schultz, Dave Stevens, Karl Story, Bill Stout, Scott Williams and Gary Martin.

Each inking sample is followed by notes and information (secrets) by the inker. This information is invaluable to a beginner or established inker.

Many items are covered in this edition including, Tools of the Trade, Brushes vs. Pens, Inking with a Brush. Also, Line Weights including Establishing the Light Source, Inking Faces, Inking Hair, Contour Lines, Spotting Blacks, Feathering, Crosshatching, Establishing Your Style, Facial-Shadow Guide, Inking Backgrounds and Advanced Techniques.

Why should an inker want this book?

Hmmmm.....

Even at a large comic book convention it would be hard to talk to this many inkers and get this much information.

In no other art books have I seen the same page inked by several different inkers to offer the reader a chance to view the difference in style and line quality.

Along with the many top-notch inkers contributing to this book, Gary has included an extensive Facial-Shadow Guide which includes the same male face inked 36 different ways using different light sources.

Gary seems to understand that a new inker needs to see the original penciled pages and has included them with each section. This helps the inker to envision what the showcased inker interprets from the pencils and what an inker can add to the finished artwork.

After reading this book you'll realize that an inker does more than *"Trace over the pencil lines"*.

The Art of Comic Book Inking is highly recommended to any one wanting to learn the trade of inking comic books.

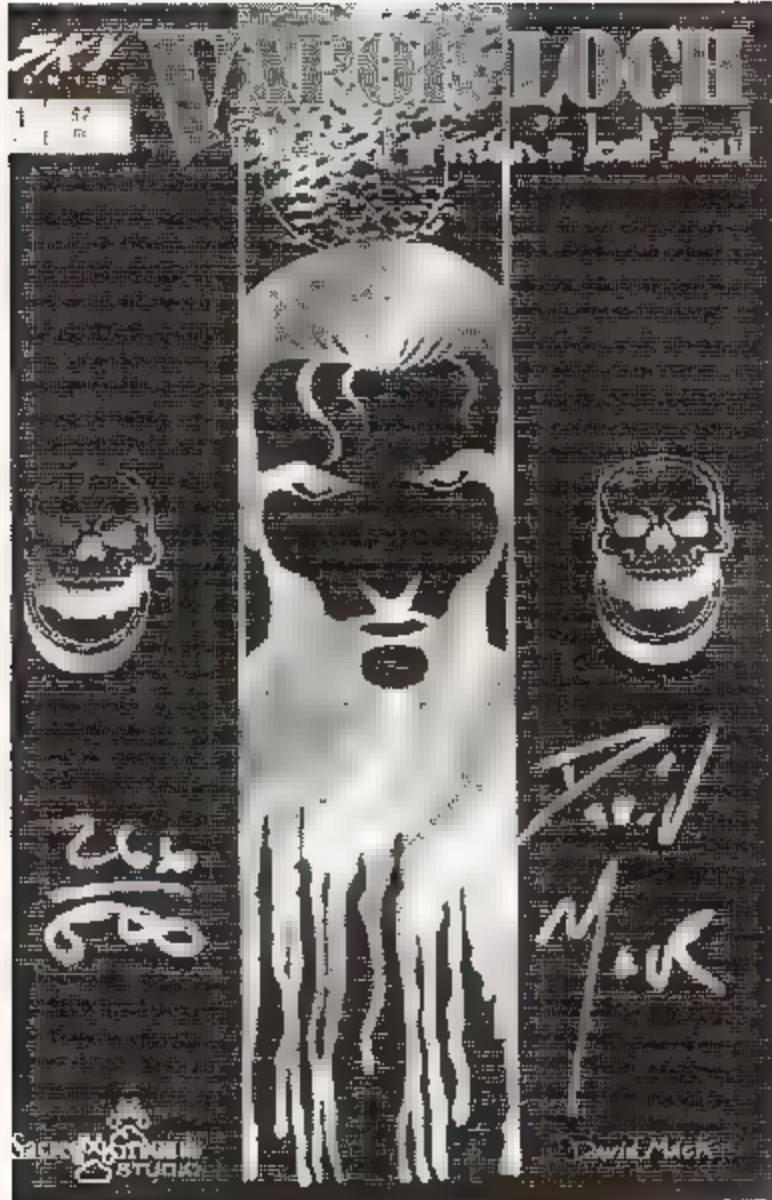
Rated ****

Passing comments: In the back of the book Gary has included a list of inkers that he wasn't able to include. I would like to see a second book including these inkers or a web page showing these samples.

T. Hunter

Blue Line

WWW.BLUELINEPRO.COM



BLUE LINE AUTHENTICS

Vapor Loch #1

Signed and Numbered by
David Mack

VL#1SN \$5.95

Very Limited!

32 pages B&W.



BLUE LINE AUTHENTICS

PARTS UNKNOWN

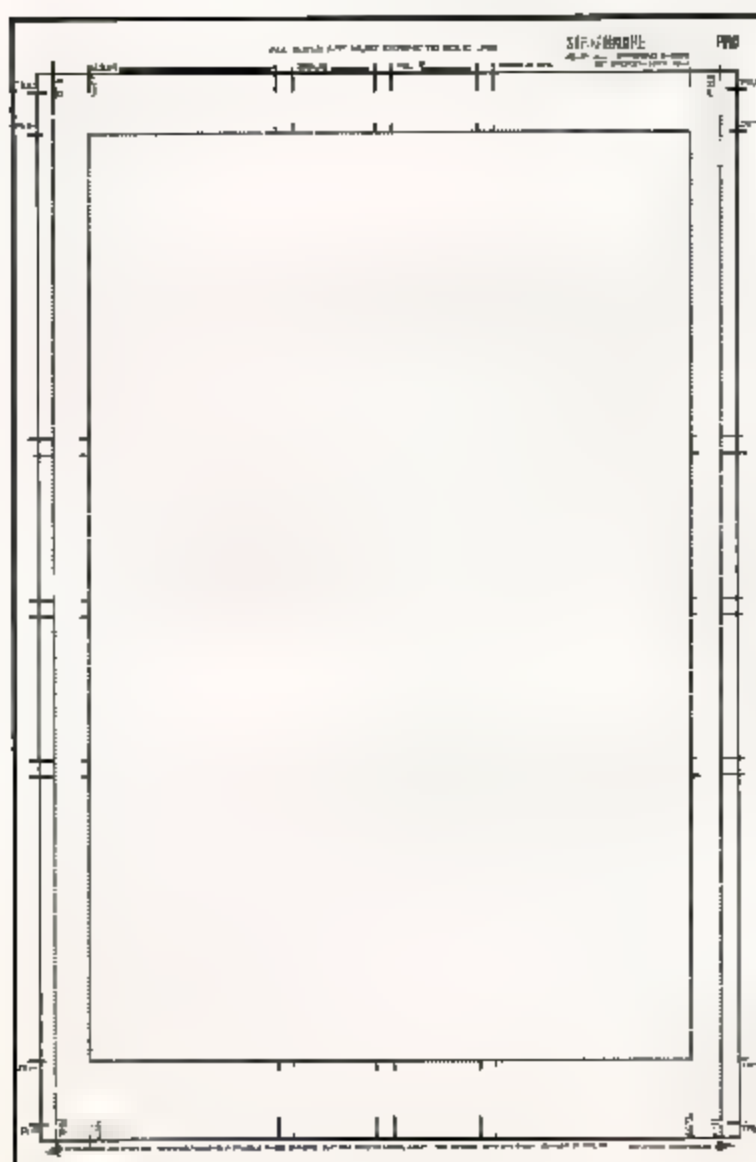
HARD COVER

New Colored Cover Signed by
Beau Smith

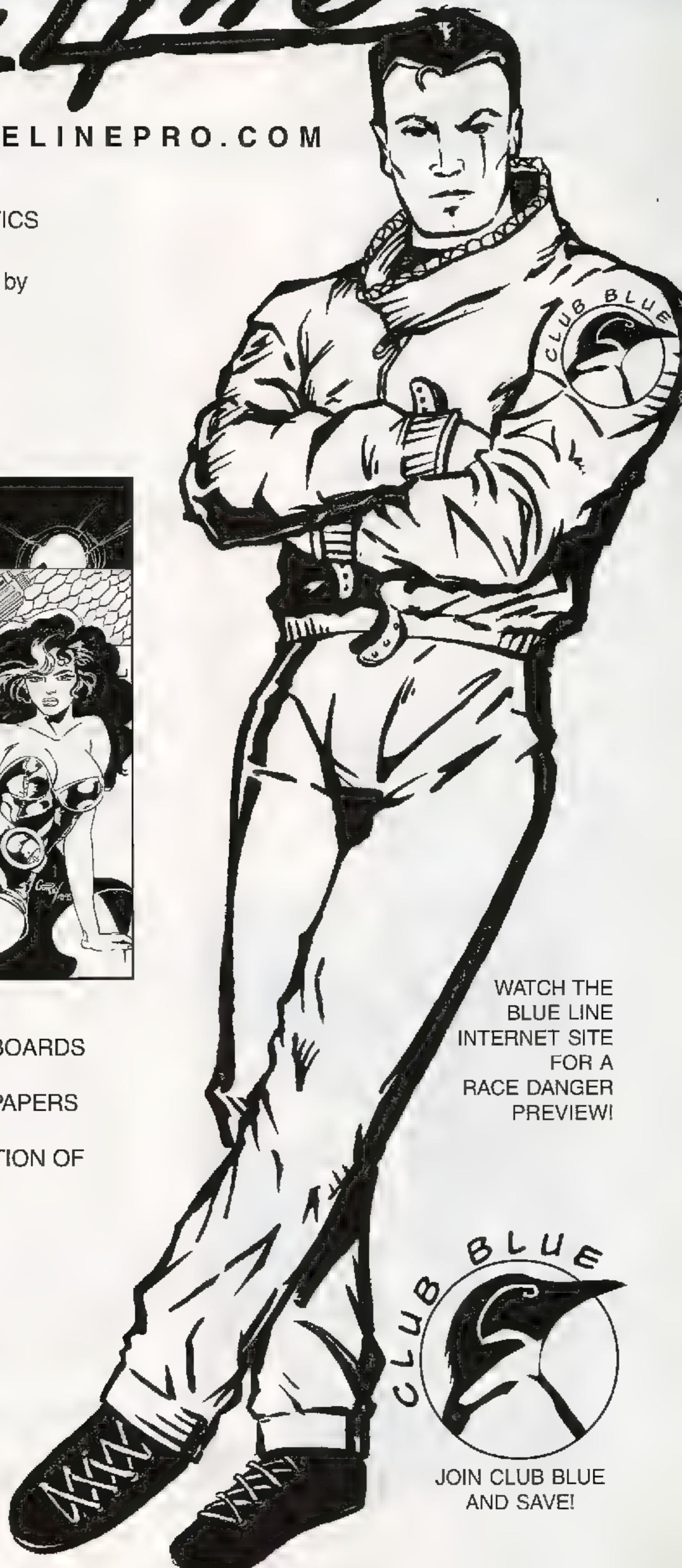
PUHC1 \$29.95

Very Limited!

110 pages B&W.



- COMIC BOOK BOARDS
- CUSTOMIZED PAPERS
- LARGE SELECTION OF
ART SUPPLIES

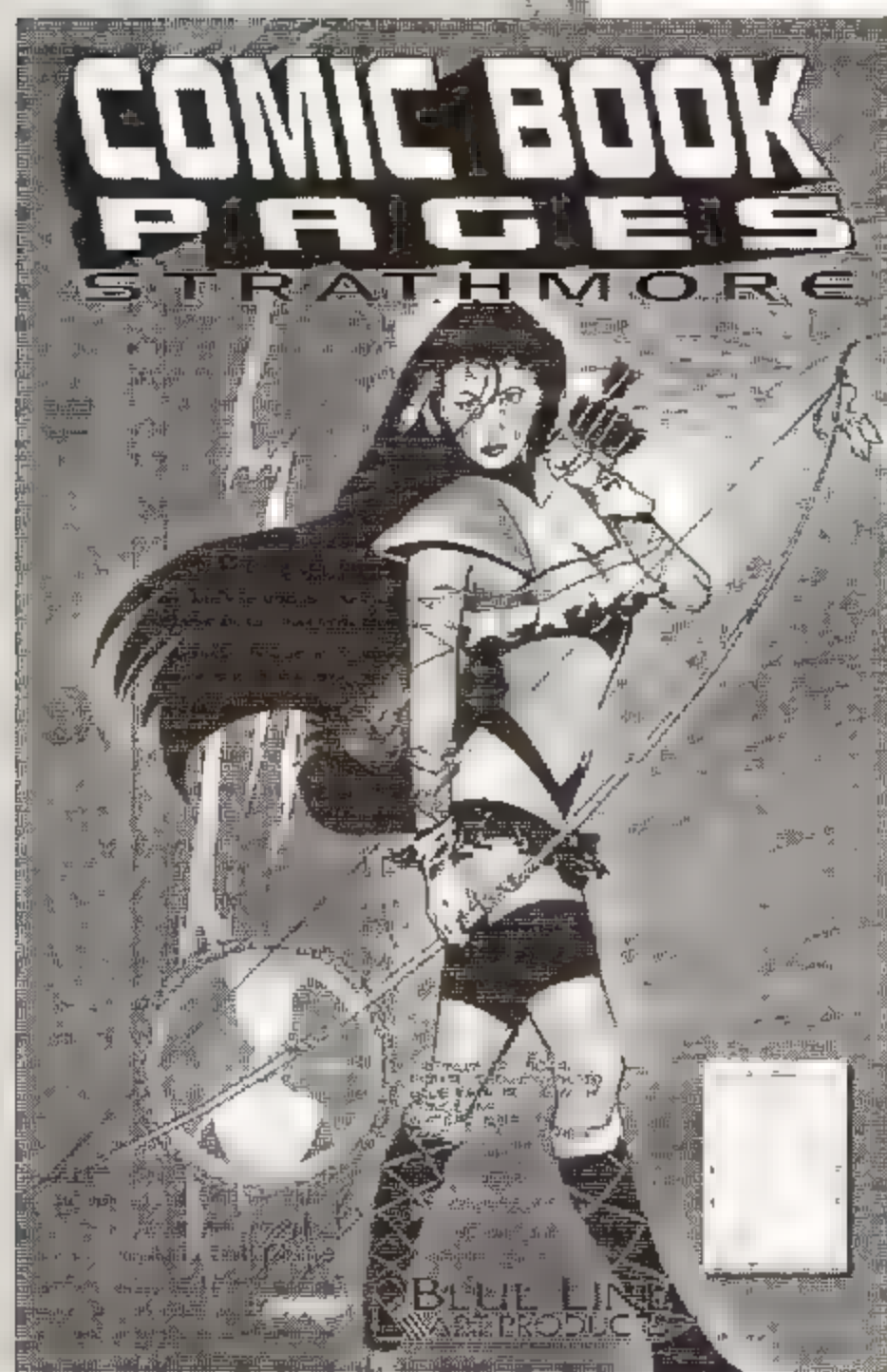


WATCH THE
BLUE LINE
INTERNET SITE
FOR A
RACE DANGER
PREVIEW!



JOIN CLUB BLUE
AND SAVE!

STRATHMORE COMIC BOOK BOARDS



STRATHMORE

300 Series Full Trim Format

PRO 300 Series Comic Book Boards is an economical heavyweight paper. Like the rest of the Blue Line products the Pro 300 Series is preprinted with a non-photo blue border that allows the artist to draw comics the actual size that professionals do.

PRO 300 Series (SMOOTH) surface is a 100lb. 100% acid free board. This Strathmore board is ideal for pen ink work and is also suited for pencil and marker.

ITEM# BL1041 SRP \$17.00

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/ bagged

PRO 300 Series (REGULAR) toothy surface is a 100lb. 100% acid free board. This Strathmore board works well with pencils, charcoal and watercolor.

ITEM# BL1042 SRP \$17.00

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/ bagged

STRATHMORE

400 Series Full Trim Format

400 Series already has a very serious history. Comic Book Boards 400 series is printed on the finest art paper available, **Strathmore**. Like the rest of the Blue Line products the 400 Series is preprinted with a non-photo blue border that allows the artist to draw comics the actual size that professionals draw

S400 Series (SMOOTH) surface is a 100% acid free bristol. This Strathmore board is ideal for detailed ink work and is also suited for pencil and marker.

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/ bagged.

ITEM# BL1043 SMOOTH 2-PLY SRP \$19.00

ITEM# BL1045 SMOOTH 3-PLY SRP \$28.00

S400 Series (REGULAR) toothy surface is a 100% acid free bristol. This Strathmore board works well with pencils, inks, charcoal and pastel.

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/ bagged.

ITEM# BL1044 REGULAR 2-PLY SRP \$19.00

ITEM# BL1046 REGULAR 3-PLY SRP \$28.00

PLY:

Ply is the thickness of the paper. A 2 ply paper has two pieces of paper pressed together and a 3 ply has 3 pieces of paper pressed together which is thicker than 2 ply

STRATHMORE

500 Series Full Trim Format

500 series comic book boards is the top of the line for art paper.

Strathmore 500 is 100% cotton fiber, Acid free and unsurpassed for fine pen and pencil work.

500 Series (SMOOTH) surface is a 100% cotton fiber acid free board. This Strathmore board is ideal for pen ink work and is also suited for pencil and marker.

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/ bagged.

ITEM# BL1047 SMOOTH 2-PLY SRP \$41.00

ITEM# BL1049 SMOOTH 3-PLY SRP \$57.75

500 Series (REGULAR) toothy surface is a 100% cotton fiber acid free board. This Strathmore board works well with pencils, charcoal and watercolor.

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" pages with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area/ bagged.

ITEM# BL1048 REGULAR 2-PLY SRP \$41.00

ITEM# BL1050 REGULAR 3-PLY SRP \$57.75

COMIC BOOK BOARDS

PRO COMIC BOOK BOARDS FULL TRIM FORMAT

Blue Line has taken the quality paper that they have used in the "Pro" pages for years and printed a newly designed Full Trim border format in non-photo blue ink.

This offering the artist the quality of Pro pages with an advanced page border.

In addition, each pack also includes one page of Blue Line Comic Book Cover Sheets, specifically laid out with a larger image area for standard comic book cover designs.

Use pencil, ink (brush recommended), markers, wash, acrylics.

ITEM# BL1038 SRP \$15.95

24 pages per pack.

11" x 17" 3-ply brite art boards with a 15 3/4" x 10 3/8" image border with a 9" x 13 3/4" safe area dotted border area and 1 Cover Sheet with 10 3/4" x 16" non-photo border printed/ bagged.

PRO COMIC BOOK BOARDS TRADITIONAL FORMAT

Pro Comic Book Boards brite white surface offers a smooth surface to pencils and inking with a brush literally glides across the surface (quill pen not recommended). Pro has offered thousands of artist the opportunity to begin their careers on a pre-printed boards like the professional publisher uses.

Traditional Format has the original 10" x 15" image border with panel markers for a traditional page layout.

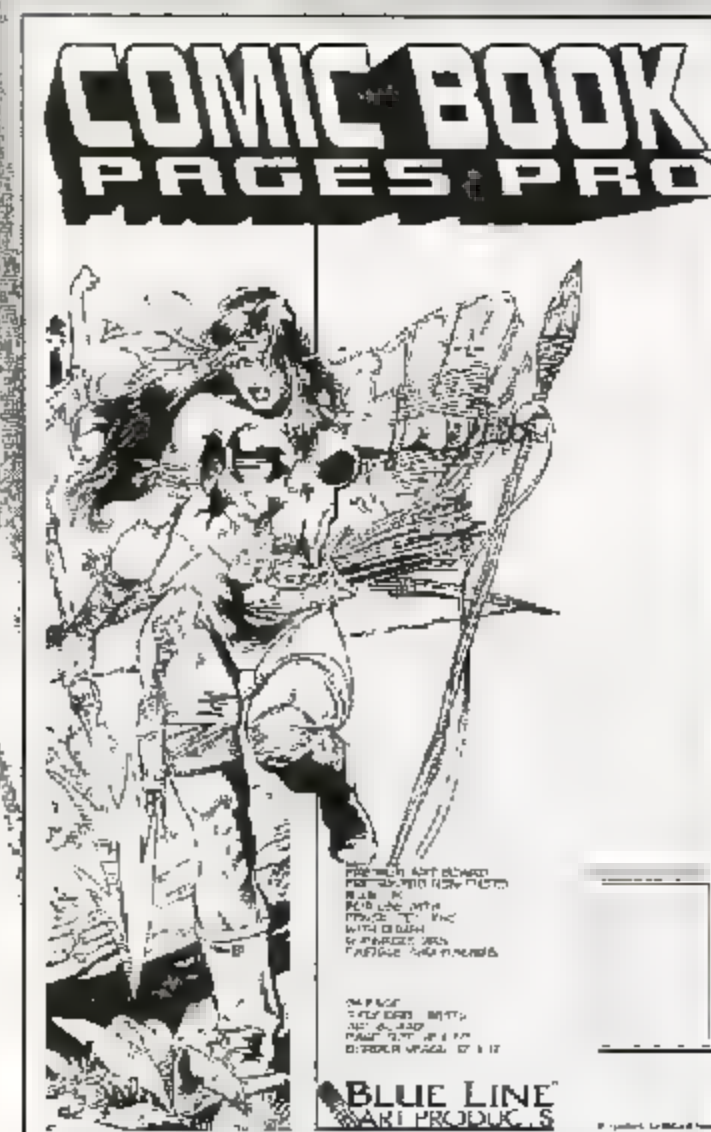
Page size is 11" x 17" with a non-photo blue image area of 10" x 15". In addition, each pack also includes one page of Blue Line Comic Book Cover Sheets, specifically laid out with a larger image area for standard comic book cover designs.

Use pencil, ink (brush recommended), markers, wash, acrylics.

ITEM# BL1001 SRP \$15.95

24 pages per pack.

11" x 17" 3-ply brite art boards with a 10" x 15" non-photo image printed and 1 Cover Sheet with 10 3/4" x 16" non-photo image printed/ bagged.



COMIC BOOK BOARDS

(Traditional Format)

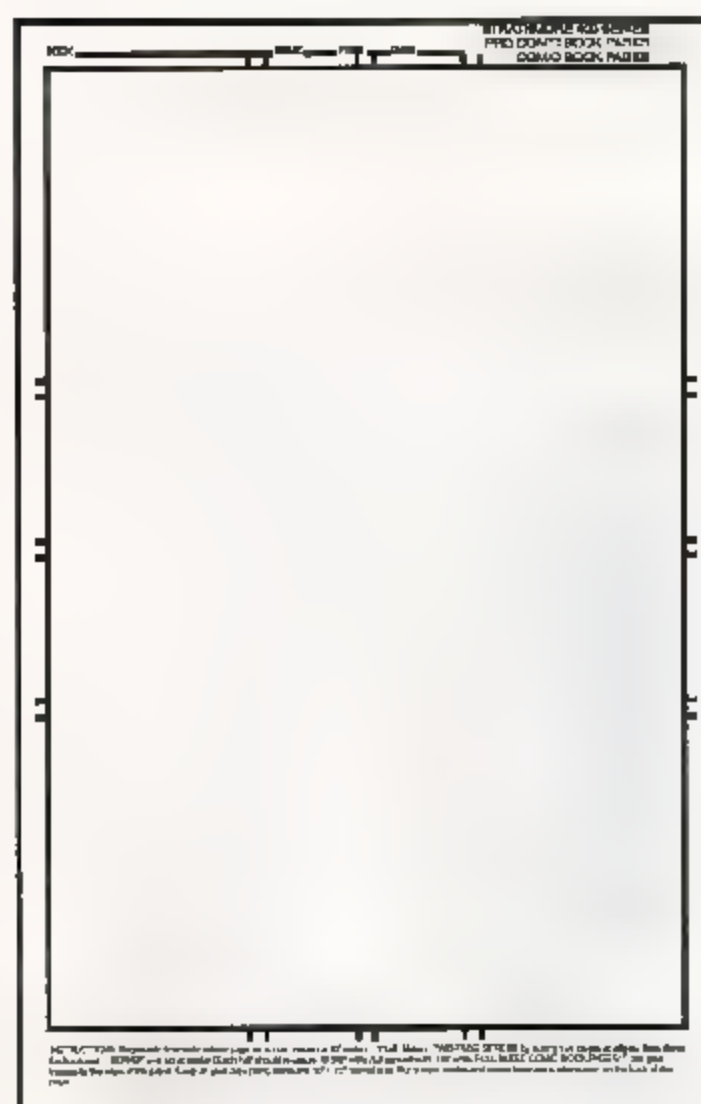
Comic Book Boards are specifically laid out with an image area for standard comic book designs. These boards like the other comic book boards offer an area to write the name of the book the artist is drawing, issue number, page number and date. This helps to keep track of your boards and where they belong. Double page spreads are a snap for an artist. Just take two comic book boards and then butt the sides together, apply tape down the back of those boards and then the artist is ready to illustrate a double-page drawing. Fast and easy with no cutting. They are 24 pages of Brite Art Index. Page size is 11" x 17" with a non-photo blue image area of 10" x 15".

Use pencil, ink (brush), marker, wash.

ITEM# BL1003 SRP \$12.95

24 pages per pack.

11" x 17" pages with a 10" x 15" non-photo image/ bagged



COMIC BOOK COVER SHEETS

These Comic Book Cover Sheets, show a border for your drawing with pre-marked bleeds for trimming with an area for the possible placement for the book's logo and company information clearly marked. This helps to keep all of the important elements of the covers from being covered up when the book logo and company info are placed later. They are 12 pages of 2-ply premium Brite art index board that come bagged and feature non-photo blue ink. Page size is 11" x 17" with an image area of 10 3/4" x 16".

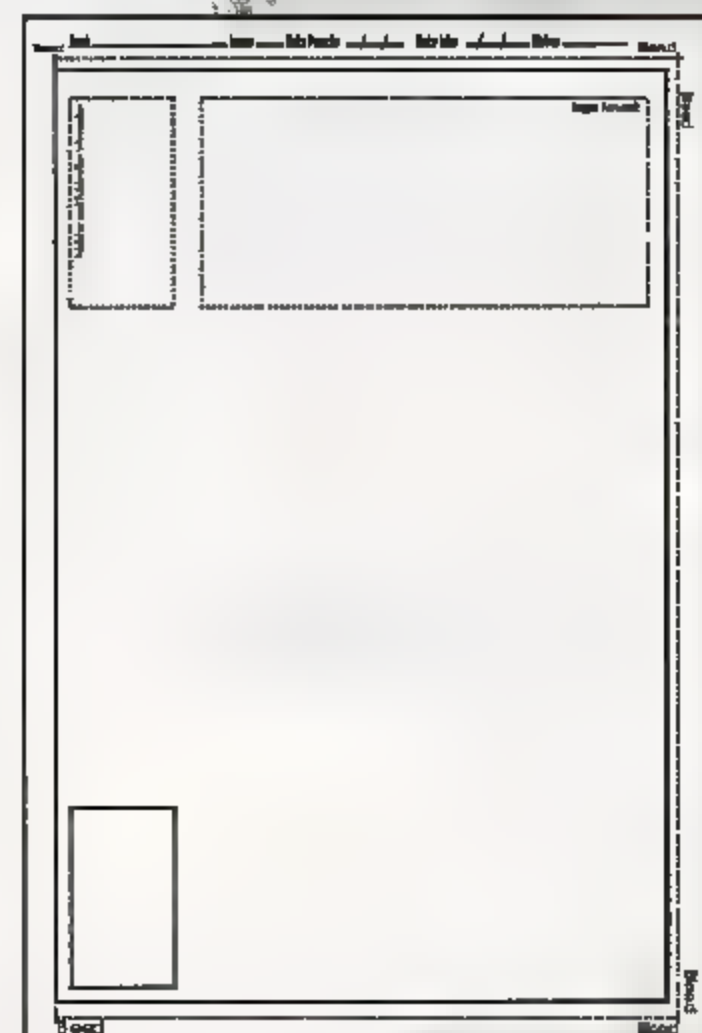
ITEM# BL1007 SRP \$9.95

12 pages per pack

11" x 17" art pages printed with a 10 3/4" x 16" non-photo blue border printed/ bagged.

Blue Line now offers comic artist an full trim comic book board to draw your comics. Just recently comic book publishers have been using full trim comic book boards to draw their comics.

Blue Line has designed a full trim page that fits most requirements for full bleed comics, but can also be used to draw traditional comic book page formats. Special dotted borders helps the artist to keep the important illustrations within an area to be sure it's not lost to trimming.



CUSTOMIZED ART PAPERS

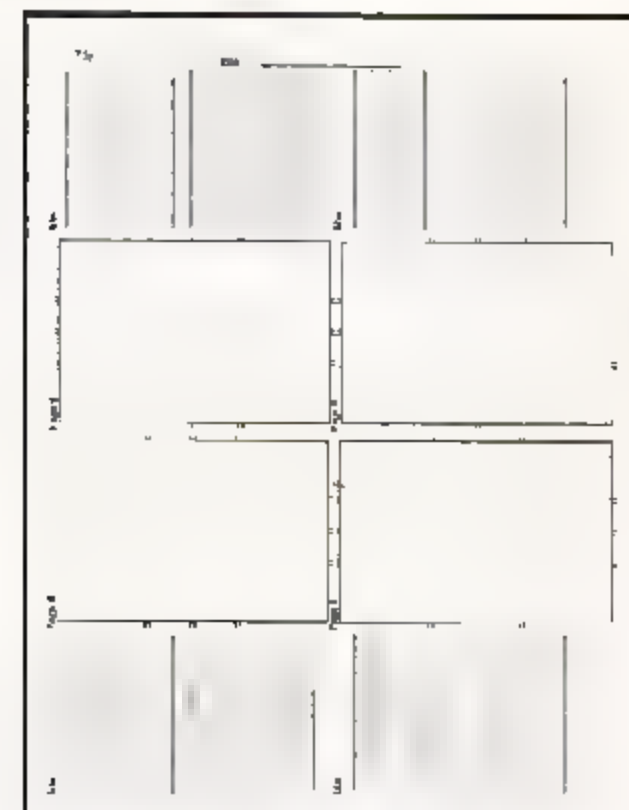
LAYOUT PAGES

Comic Book Layout Pages uses premium bond paper and printed in non-photo blue, of course, features markings to layout four thumbnails per sheet to detail your comic book page ideas and room for notations and other information.

Used for story boarding your comic book story. A great tool for artists or writers to work out details for the story along with layouts of pages.

ITEM# BL1005 **SRP \$8.95**

30 8 1/2" x 11" pages printed in non-photo blue/ bagged.



STORYBOARD TEMPLATES

Animators and Storyboard artist! Blue Line Storyboard Templates offers animators and writers a quick and easy way to show movement and sequences of a story or animation.

Storyboard Templates have three large panels with lines below each for detailed art and storytelling.

ITEM# BL1018 **SRP \$13.95**

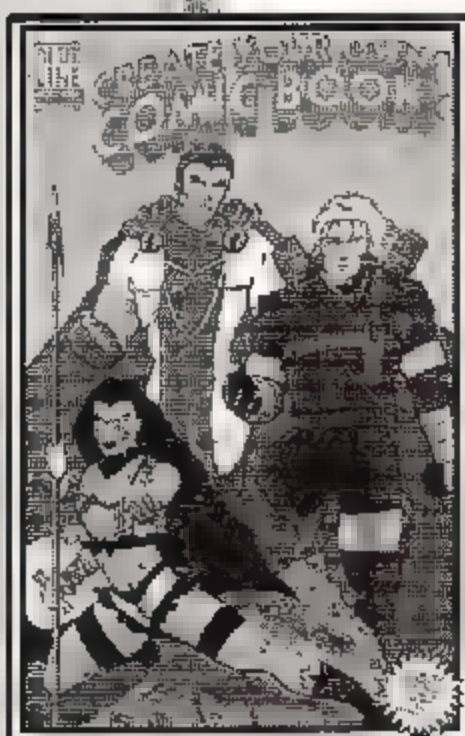
100 sheets of 60 lb. 8 1/2" x 14" pages with 3 panels padded with colored cover.

CREATE YOUR OWN COMIC BOOK!

Blue Line has developed a simple and inexpensive step by step to create your very first comic book, that's fun, easy and comprehensive. A box set of Blue Line products that aid a person in making their own comic! It includes 1 Character Template, 6 Concept Sketch Pages, 6 Comic Book Layout Pages, 24 Comic Book Pages, 1 Comic Book Cover Sheet and a 24 page instructional comic book.

ITEM# BL1002 **SRP \$21.95**

Box Set. 37 art pages / 24 page b&w instructional comic book / full color die cut box / shrink wrapped.



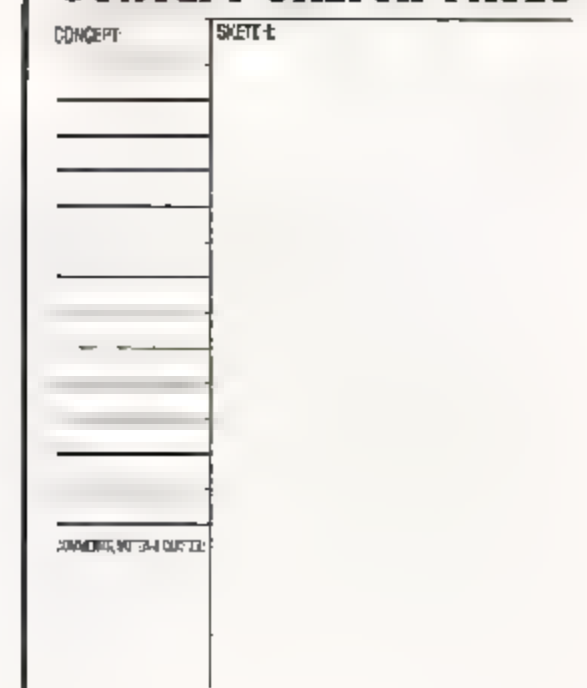
CONCEPT SKETCH PAGES

Record and organize your creative ideas on a convenient, quality art board. Concept Sketch Pages are made from premium index board featuring non-photo blue ink so that the artist can ink his illustrations on a non-repro surface. Concept Sketch Pages offer an image area for an illustrator to draw a character scene or anything. And, it also gives room for written information to be included with the artwork. This is handy when a character is designed for a comic book and you want to include his bio, powers, etc. or a Role Playing character you're playing. These pages can easily be hole punched and inserted into a binder. A character template is even included for quick and easy character creations!

ITEM# BL1004 **SRP \$8.95**

25 art pages printed in non-photo blue/ bagged

CONCEPT SKETCH PAGES

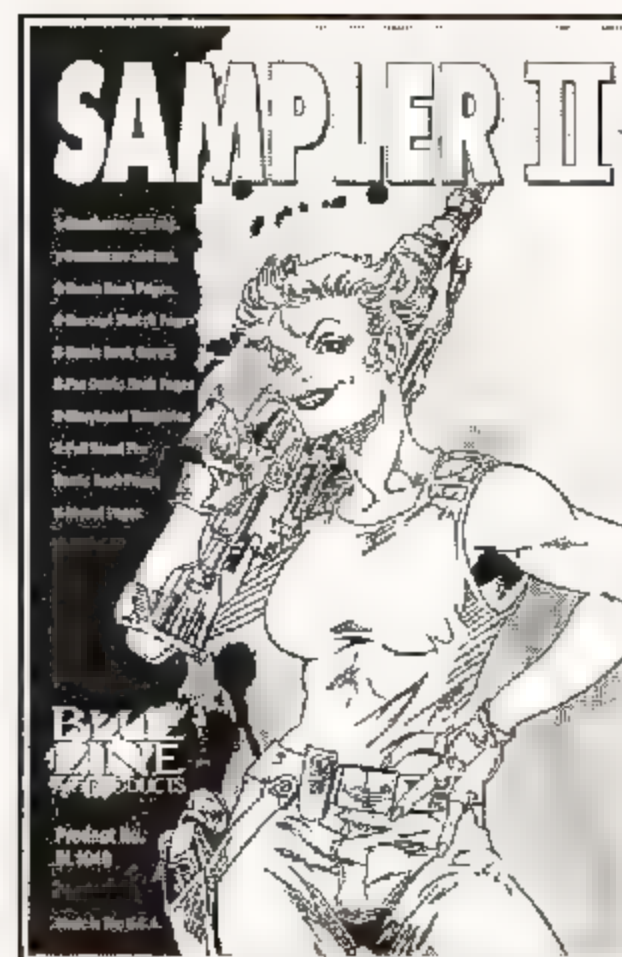


BLUE LINE SAMPLER II

If you haven't tried Blue Line products, here's your chance! The Blue Line Sampler includes 4-Comic Book Pages, 4-Concept Sketch Pages, 3-Comic Book Cover Sheets, 3- Layout Pages, 3-Pro Comic Book Pages, 3-Storyboard Templates, 3-Full Bleed Pro C.B. Pages, 1-Strathmore 300 smooth, 1- Strathmore 300 regular. All in non-photo blue, of course! That's 25 pages of five different Blue Line products! Check out all Blue Line and Blue Line Pro products in one fell swoop!

ITEM# BL1040 **SRP \$13.95**

25 pages of 8 different Blue Line products. 4-Comic Book Pages, 4-Concept Sketch Pages, 3-Comic Book Cover Sheets, 3- Layout Pages, 3-Pro Comic Book Pages, 3-Storyboard Templates, 3-Full Bleed Pro C.B. Pages, 1-Strathmore 300 smooth, 1- Strathmore 300 regular. 25 pages per pack.



PENCILER ART KIT

The Penciler art kit includes the following tools, papers and supplies: 1-6" Ruler, 2-Protractor, 2-45/90 Triangle, 2-60/30 Triangle, 1-Compass, 1-Pencil Sharpener, 1-Eraser, 1-Large Kneaded Eraser, 3-Non Photo Blue Pencils, 1-12" Ruler, 20-Regular Comic Book Pages with pre printed borders. Travel box.

ITEM# BL1013 **SRP \$29.95**

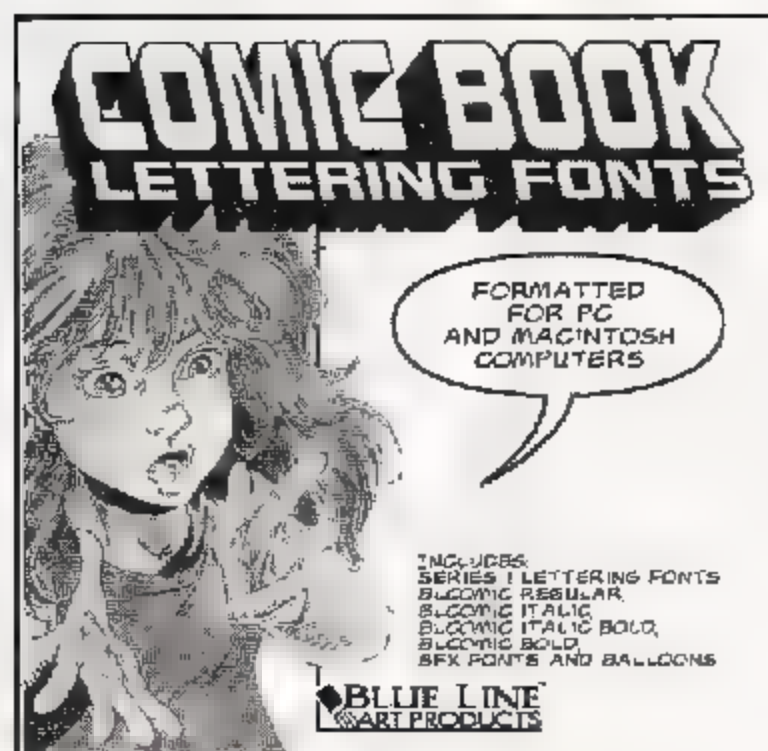
INKER ART KIT

The Inker Art Kits includes the following tools, papers and supplies; 1-#102 Inking Pen, 1-1 oz. Black Waterproof Ink, 1-#2 Round Brush, 1-Protractor, 1-45/90 Triangle, 1-60/30 Triangle, 1-12" Ruler, 1-Kneaded Eraser, 2 copies of artwork to light table, 20 Pro Comic Book Pages. 1-Non Photo Blue Pencil. Travel box.

ITEM# BL1012 **SRP \$34.95**



SKETCH PAD. FONTS. WORK BOOK SERIES



BLUE LINE COMIC BOOK LETTERING FONT SERIES 1

Blue Line now offers creators an inexpensive lettering font.

BLCOMIC font is formatted for Macintosh and PC Compatibles in a TruType format. BLSFX is a special effects font with pre-created sound effects that are ready for you to drop into place.

Also included is user configurable word balloons in eps format.

ITEM# BL1019 **SRP \$19.95**

Includes: BLCOMIC font (Regular, Bold, Italic, Italic Bold). BLSFX font and configurable word balloons.

3 1/2 disk PC and Mac. format.

BLCOMIC FONT: **ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890**

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890**

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890**

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890**

BLSFX FONT:

ARCH! BZUM CRASH DOOM YAH! FAWOOSH

CLUB HAM JINGLE MUNCH

OW FOW RUMBLE SLASH TP UGGH VA-ROOOM

WHAM YAWN ZAP

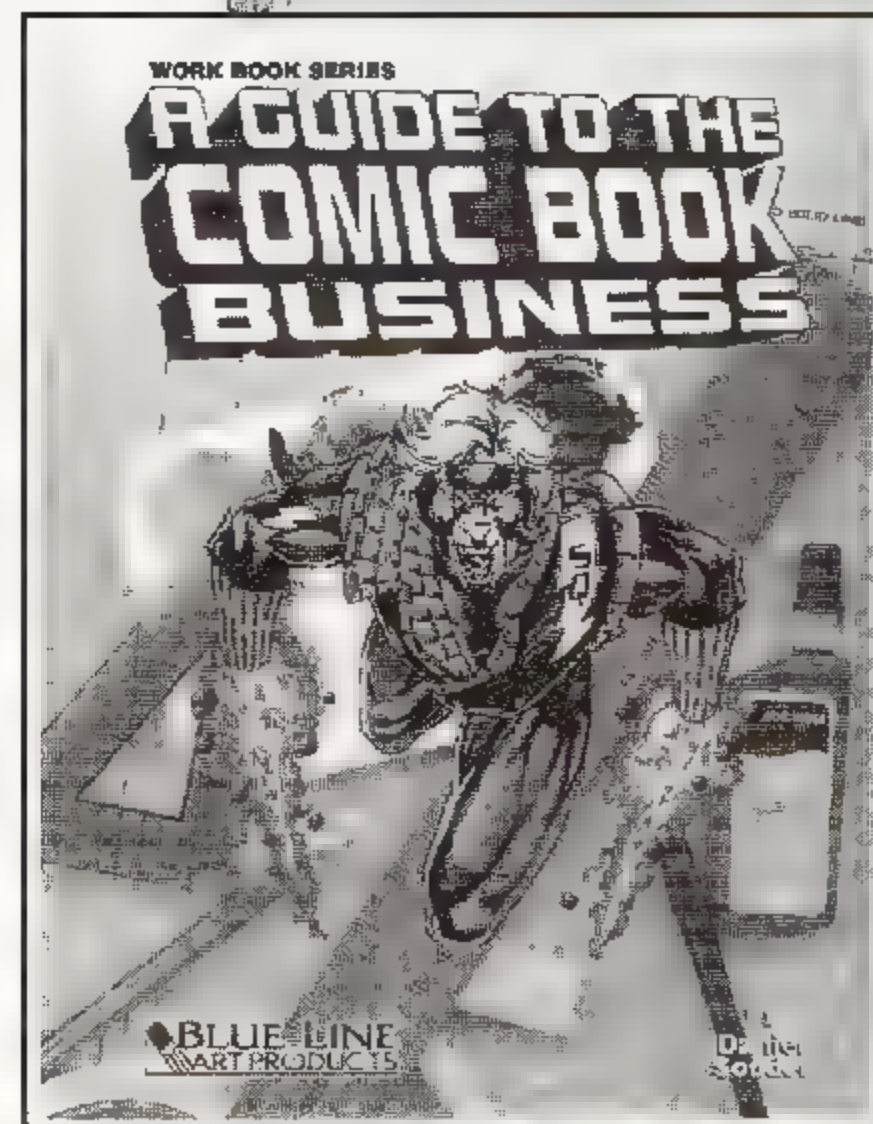
BLUE LINE: A GUIDE TO THE COMIC BOOK BUSINESS

Every fan who reads comics has at one time or another felt the urge to join in on the fun, to take a more active role, to become a player instead of a spectator. In short, to create. You have the desire, now you need a plan.

That's where Blue Line's A Guide To The Comic Book Business comes in. It covers all of the basics for starting and maintaining a successful career in the comic book industry. It doesn't matter if your skills lie in penciling or management, this book tells you what to do to turn your hobby into a paid profession.

The first chapter gets you up-to-date on how the industry is set up. It gives you the basic information necessary to be a knowledgeable participant in the comics field. Now that you're seated, we serve the appetizers - how to go about creating your own comics. After you've digested this important info, it's time for the main course. You'll discover proven methods for making yourself an outstanding candidate. Then, we take a look at other jobs in the industry outside of the creative aspect for all of you wannabe corporate types. For a side dish, chapter five deals with that small but growing niche of the industry - the small press and self-publisher. Finally, dessert. We clue you in on effective ways to advertise and promote your work so that you can actually make money off of your talents.

So, for everyone who's ever dreamed of being on the other side of the table at a comic convention, doodled more in class notebooks than actually taking notes, this book is for you.



Forward by Beau Smith Executive Director of Publishing for McFarlane Productions

Written by Daniel Souder. Edited by Bob Hickey

ITEM# BL1014 **SRP \$17.95**

90 pages / b&w with full color cover. Spiral bound.

POCKET SKETCH PAD

50 pages of heavy illustration board to carry around in your pocket to have ready when your hit with a revolutionary vision. Great for quick sketches and designs. Featuring Blue Line's quality illustration paper. Great for pencilling, inking and washes.

50 pages / 5" x 9 1/2" / padded / two-color cover

Item # BL1051 **SRP \$5.95**



ART SUPPLIES

INK

- AR-4415 Black Ink (Higgins) 1oz. **\$3.00**
 AR-EF44011 Black Magic Ink (Higgins) 1oz. **\$3.50**
 AR-PE211862 Black India Ink (Pelikan) 1oz. **\$4.75**
 AR-PE211169 Black India Ink (Pelikan) 8oz. **\$18.75**
 AR-PE221374 Black Ink Pelikan "T" 1oz. **\$6.00**

WHITE OUT

- AR-FW-011 FW Acrylic Artist Ink **\$5.00**

BRUSHES

- AR-5007001 Winsor/Newton Series7 Size#1 **\$18.95**
 AR-5007002 Winsor/Newton Series7 Size#2 **\$22.95**
 AR-NB-38-0 Round Brush Size #0 **\$3.00**
 AR-NB-38-1 Round Brush Size #1 **\$3.25**
 AR-NB-38-2 Round Brush Size #2 **\$3.95**
 AR-056009016 Round Brush #3 **\$3.95**

PENCILS & QUILL PENS

- AR-761-5 Non-photo Blue Pencil **\$.60**
 AR-H9432 Quill Inking Pen #102 (Tip & Holder) **\$2.25**
 AR-H9402 12 Crow Quill #102 Tips (Inking Pen Nibs) **\$13.95**

KOH-I-NOOR RAPIDOGGRAPH PENS

- AR-3165-06/0 Tech Pen Size 6x0 (.13mm) **\$27.00**
 AR-3165-04/0 Tech Pen Size 4x0 (.18mm) **\$27.00**
 AR-3165-03/0 Tech Pen Size 3x0 (.25mm) **\$22.00**
 AR-3165-02/0 Tech Pen Size 2x0 (.3mm) **\$22.00**
 AR-3165-01/0 Tech Pen Size #0 (.35mm) **\$22.00**
 AR-3165-01 Tech Pen Size #1 (.5mm) **\$22.00**
 AR-3165-02 Tech Pen Size #2 (.6mm) **\$22.00**
 AR-3165-03 Tech Pen Size #3 (.8mm) **\$22.00**
 AR-3165-04 Tech Pen Size #4 (1mm) **\$22.00**
 AR-3165-06 Tech Pen Size #6 (1.4mm) **\$22.00**
 AR-3165-07 Tech Pen Size #7 (2mm) **\$22.00**

KOH-I-NOOR RAPIGRAPH INK

- AR-3084-FI Koh-I-Noor Ink **\$3.95**

T-SQUARES

- AR-HX02 Plastic 12" **\$3.95**
 AR-NBA18 Plastic 18" **\$7.95**
 AR-NBA24 Plastic 24" **\$10.95**
 AR-FR63-112 Aluminum 12" **\$10.95**
 AR-FR63-118 Aluminum 18" **\$12.95**
 AR-FR63-124 Aluminum 24" **\$13.95**

RULERS

- AR-200-12 Steel Ruler 12 inch Cork Backing **\$5.95**
 AR-200-18 Steel Ruler 18 inch Cork Backing **\$6.95**
 AR-C36 Ruler 12" (plastic ruler) **\$1.25**
 AR-18 Ruler 6" (plastic ruler) **\$.50**

TRIANGLES 30" x 60"W/ Inking Edge

- AR-1204-60 Triangle 30"x60" 4 inch **\$3.50**
 AR-1206-60 Triangle 30"x60" 6 inch **\$4.50**
 AR-1208-60 Triangle 30"x60" 8 inch **\$5.50**
 AR-1210-60 Triangle 30"x60" 10 inch **\$6.50**
 AR-1212-60 Triangle 30" 60" 12 inch **\$8.50**

TRIANGLES 45" X 90"W/ Inking Edge

- AR-1204-45 Triangle 45"x90" 4 inch **\$4.50**
 AR-1206-45 Triangle 45"x90" 6 inch **\$5.50**
 AR-1208-45 Triangle 45"x90" 8 inch **\$7.50**
 AR-1210-45 Triangle 45"x90" 10 inch **\$9.50**
 AR-1212-45 Triangle 45"x90" 12 inch **\$13.50**

COMPASS SET

- AR-HX18807 8-piece Geometry Set **\$4.95**
 AR-723405 8-Piece Geometry Set (brass compass) **\$7.95**

CIRCLE TEMPLATES / FRENCH CURVES

- AR-13001 Large Circles **\$7.95**
 AR-13011 Extra Large Circles **\$6.95**
 AR-9000 French Curves (Inking Edge) Set **\$6.95**
 AR-PK12691 Ellipse Temps **\$12.00**

ERASERS

- AR-1224 Kneaded Rubber Eraser Large **\$1.15**

- AR-400 Eraser Pencils **\$1.15**

(Peel off wrap ideal for detail erasing)

- AR-ZE-21C Pentel Clic Eraser/Holder **\$1.95**

(retract as needed)

- AR-ZER-2 2 Pentel Refill Erasers **\$1.75**

- AR-FT-5370 Erasing Shield **\$1.10**

PENCIL SHARPNER

- AR-MR906 Canister Sharpener **\$3.95**

MECHANICAL PENCIL

- AR-PLP207-C Pentel Mech. Pencil 2 MM. **\$6.95**
 AR-PL50-HB 12-Pencil Leads- 0.2MM HB (Pentel) **\$10.50**
 AR-PL50-2H 12-Pencil Leads- 0.2MM 2H (Pentel) **\$10.50**
 AR-BP14C Pencil Sharpener (Mech. Pencil) **\$10.75**

PORTFOLIOS

- AR-FL419WH Portfolio (CLUB BLUE) **\$10.50**

Misc.

- AR-FT5391 Draftsman Brush (cleaning paper) **\$6.00**
 AR-XA3626 Xacto Knife **\$5.25**
 AR-OLKB Xacto Refill Blades #1 **\$6.50**
 AR-KR1306 Workable Fixatif (Krylon) **\$8.95**
 AR-BT138 Rubber Cement 4oz. **\$3.50**
 AR-BT102 Rubber Cement Quart **\$13.235**
 AR-BT201 Rubber Cement Thinner Pint **\$8.50**
 AR-BT700 Rubber Cement Pick-Up (eraser) **\$1.50**

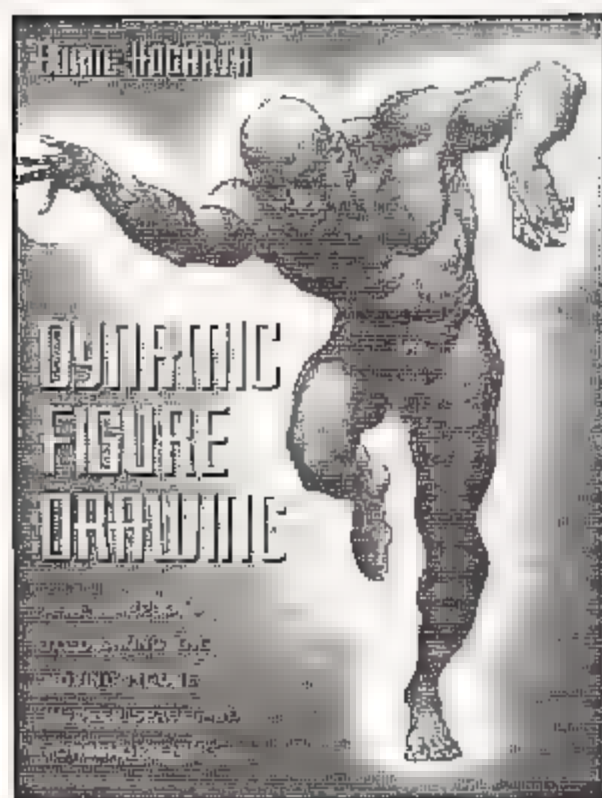
SHARPIE MARKERS

- AR-SA37101 Ultra Fine Black **\$1.30**
 AR-SA35101 Extra Fine Black **\$1.30**
 AR-SA30101 Regular Black **\$1.30**
 AR-SA33101 Super Sharpie **\$1.30**

METALLIC PENS for Autographs

- AR-SA46115 Gold Pen **\$4.50**
 AR-SA46120 Silver Pen **\$4.50**

ART BOOKS



DYNAMIC FIGURE DRAWING

By Burne Hogarth

Figure drawing is the most essential - and the most difficult - of all skills for the artist to learn. the hardest problem is to visualize the figure in the tremendous variety of poses which the body takes in action, poses which plunge the various forms for the body into deep space and show them in radical foreshortening.

ITEM# AB1001 SRP \$23.00

176 pages. 8 1/2 x 11. Hundreds of drawings and diagrams.



DYNAMIC ANATOMY

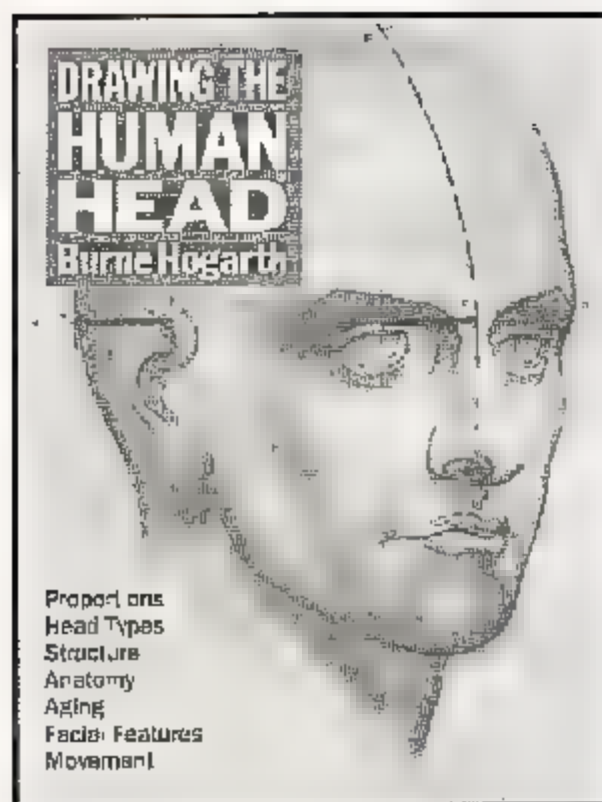
By Burne Hogarth

Dynamic Anatomy presents a unique, detailed study of the human figure as artistic anatomy

By emphasizing the relationship of mass to movement and thus going far beyond the factual elements of anatomy, this fascinating book affords the reader sound practical methods for drawing human forms that come alive.

ITEM# AB1002 SRP \$22.25

232 pages. 8 1/2 x 11. Over 300 two color drawings and diagrams. Bibliography. Index.



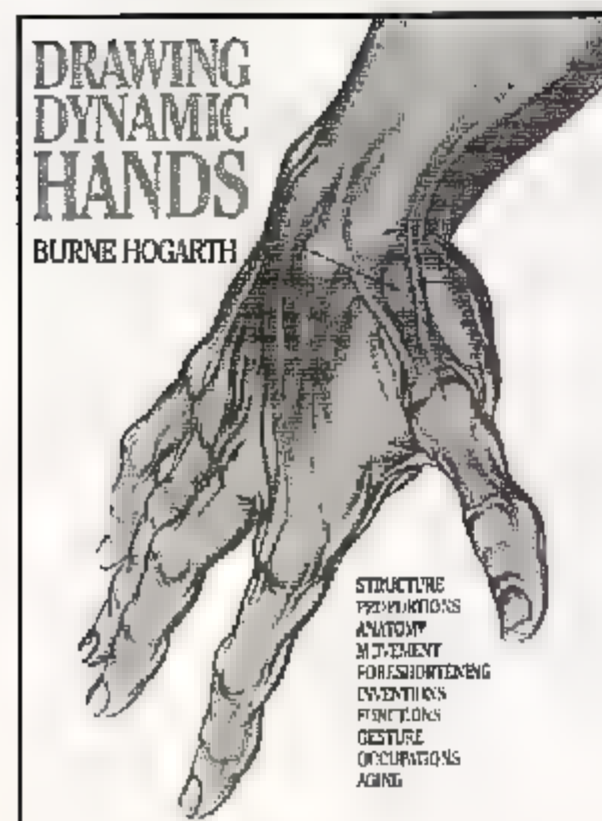
DRAWING THE HUMAN HEAD

By Burne Hogarth

Drawing the Human Head represents a landmark in art instruction books. A comprehensive work on the human head, this outstanding handbook is so unique in concept and approach that no artist's library will be complete without it.

ITEM# AB1003 SRP \$19.75

160 pages. 8 1/2 x 11. Over 300 black and white illustrations.



DRAWING DYNAMIC HANDS

By Burne Hogarth

Drawing Dynamic Hands is one of the most challenging skills required of the artist who draws the human figure. Here, Burne Hogarth, master of the human form, presents the most comprehensive book ever published on drawing human hands.

ITEM# AB1004 SRP \$19.75

144 pages. 8 1/4 x 11. Over 300 black and white illustrations.

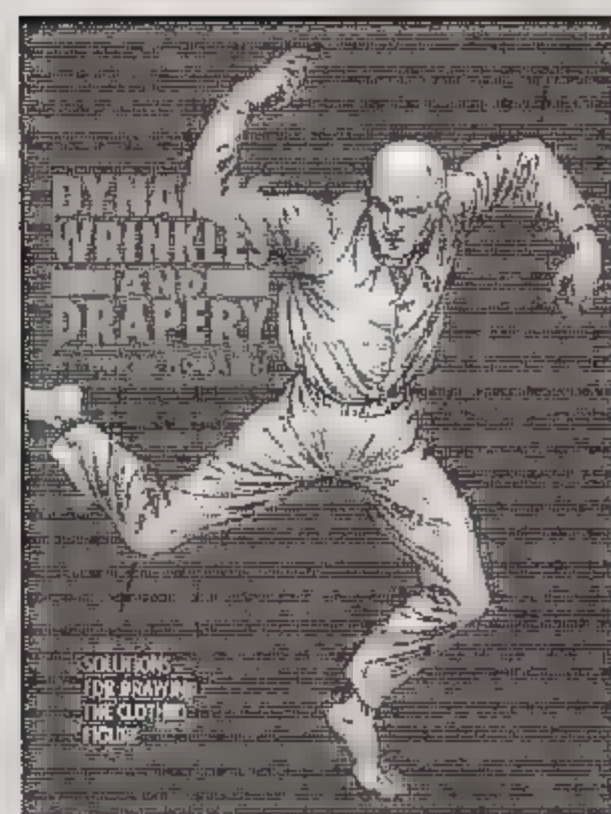
DYNAMIC WRINKLES AND DRAPERY

By Burne Hogarth

Through a series of extraordinary drawings and diagrams, Mr. Hogarth, famous for his wrinkles, folds, and drapery. His basic idea is that an accurate rendering of wrinkle patterns depends on understanding how the actions of a figure provoke any material.

ITEM# AB1005 SRP \$26.00

144 pages. 8 1/4 x 11. over 150 two-color illustrations.



DYNAMIC LIGHT AND SHADE

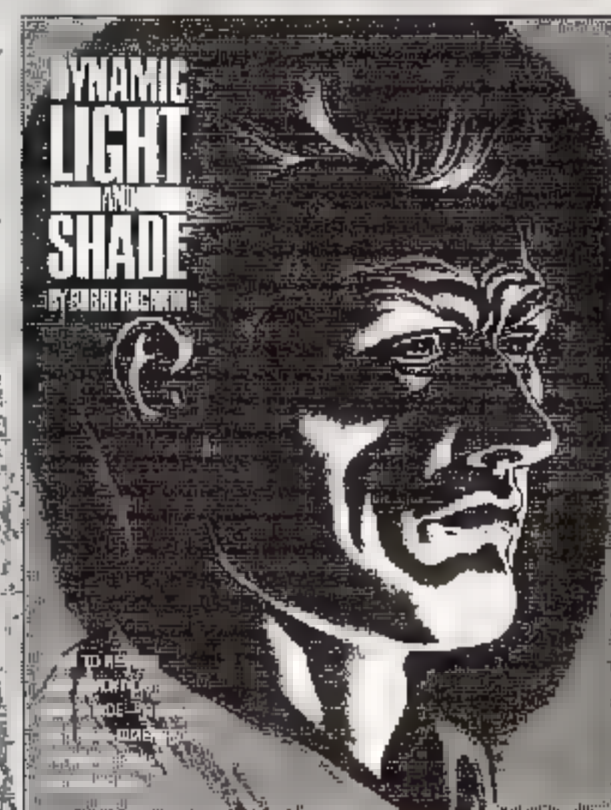
By Burne Hogarth

Mastery of light and shade-rendered with accuracy and expressive power-is the key to three-dimensional form in drawing and painting.

Hogarth begins with the simplest kind of light and shade, showing how a dark silhouette on white paper can communicate form and space. He then shows how the silhouette is transformed into three dimensions with the addition of minimal light-the highlight.

ITEM# AB1006 SRP \$19.75

160 pages. 8 1/4 x 11. 224 black and white illustrations.



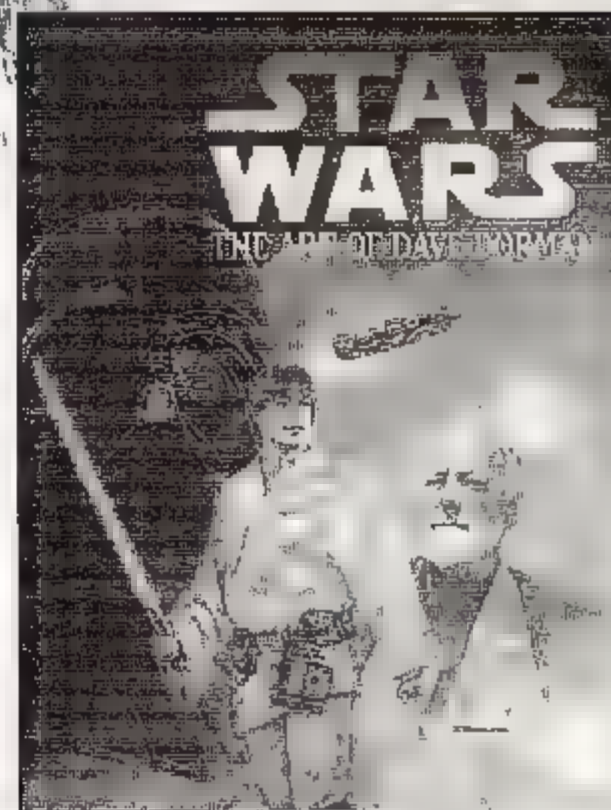
STAR WARS THE ART OF DAVE DORMAN

by Dave Dorman and Lurene Haines

One of the most outstanding illustrators to come along in the past decade. Dave Dorman has made his mark on the Star Wars saga. This book offers the most complete volume of Dave's Star Wars illustrations. Packed with paints, sketches and a very detailed how-to from original design to completed painting of this book's cover.

ITEM# BL1007 SRP \$29.25

128 pages. 9 x 11. Over 150 paintings, sketches and photos.



THE ART OF COMIC BOOK INKING

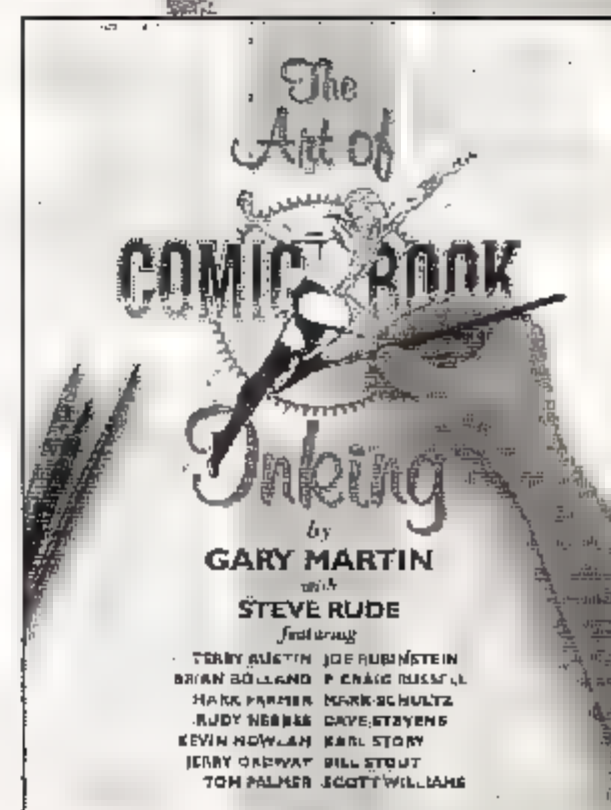
by Gary Martin with Steve Rude

Tips from comics' greatest inkers! Tools of the trade! Brushes vs. pens! Feathering! Establishing a light source! Developing a style! Spotting blacks! Crosshatching!

For anyone interested in The Art of Comic-Book Inking

ITEM# BL1008 SRP \$17.50

112 pages. 8 1/4 x 11. Over 180 illustrations and diagrams.



MERCHANDISE ORDER FORM

SMBLCATV1N1

ITEM NUMBER	QTY.	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	15% Discount CLUB PRICE	TOTAL
<p>TAX Non Kentucky residents do not need to add tax Kentucky residents add 6%</p>					
<p>SHIPPING AND HANDLING</p> <p><i>To Ship Products by UPS is Insured up to \$100.00, US Mail add \$1.00 per \$50.00 Order for insurance.</i></p> <p>Domestic United States- Orders under \$45, add \$6 Over \$45 add 15% of order</p> <p>Orders sent to Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico ship US Mail and may take 2-3 weeks longer to arrive.</p> <p>Canadian & International- Call or E-Mail for Shipping Charges.</p> <p>SHIPPING IS INCLUDED IN SUBSCRIPTION TO SKETCH MAGAZINE, BUT NOT IN BACK ISSUES OR ANY OTHER PRODUCTS.</p> <p>SKETCH MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTION 6-ISSUE \$35.70 U.S. CANADA & MEXICO \$49.00 FOREIGN \$98.00</p>					
<p>sub total + tax + shipping & handling + membership = grand total</p>					

☐ U.P.S. ☐ U.S. MAIL

Sold to: (CARD HOLDER)

name

address

city	state	country	zip/postal code
------	-------	---------	-----------------

daytime phone _____ daytime fax _____

ship to (if different than sold to):

name

address

city	state	country	zip/postal code
------	-------	---------	-----------------

daytime phone	daytime fax
---------------	-------------

Charge to my ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ American Express ☐ Discover ☐ check/money order enclosed

credit card number	exp date	check amount
--------------------	----------	--------------

authorized signature (required) _____ check number _____

credit card bank of issue _____ date _____

AGREE TO PAY ABOVE TOTAL AMOUNT ACCORDING TO CARD ISSUER AGREEMENT



Send to:
BLUE LINE PRO Attn:
Order Dept. SK1
P.O. BOX 6426,
Florence, KY 41022-6426
Phone:(606)282-0096
Fax: (606) 282-9412

ORDERING:

Please be sure that all necessary details are included.
quantity; Item number and description.

BACKORDERS:

In general, any item not in stock at time of shipment will be backordered, unless customer specifically requests to be on a permanent "no-backorder" basis. Freight terms of original shipment will apply.

PRICES:

All prices are subject to change without notice. Please feel free to request a quote for current prices.

PAYMENT METHOD:

Check ,Money Order or Credit Card (MasterCard ,
Visa ,American Express Cards,Discover Card, Novus
Cards)

FREIGHT TERMS:

In general all orders will be shipped per-paid and the freight amount will be added to your invoice. We will ship by truck line or UPS, if it is less expensive than a parcel service Free Freight on \$300.00 or more

SPECIAL ORDERS:

We will sell art paper in bulk quantities, customizing is available also.

CLAIMS:

Discrepancies between packing list and goods actually received must be reported within 10 days. Beyond this point, claims become extremely difficult to investigate and resolve.

Shipments will be made by the most satisfactory method in our judgment, unless particular shipping instructions are specified. Great care is used in packing all orders. Our responsibility ends, however, when the shipment is delivered to the carrier and accordingly, we are not liable for goods damaged or lost in transit. All claims, therefore should be filed with the carrier. We will gladly assist in substantiating such claims.

RETURNS:

will gladly accept returns provided goods are in resalable condition, listed in catalog and are received within 30 days of ship date. Returns must be previously authorized by our office. We are sorry, but no returns can be accepted under any other conditions. Returned goods will be subject to a 20% restocking charge. Items not in resalable condition may be refused or incur an additional service charge. Returns are for merchandise credit only.

Sketch



For \$35.70 a year you can receive valuable information for comic book creators, including tips on writing, penciling, inking, lettering, computer coloring and other technical aspects of the comic profession. There are also many informational articles by successful comic book creators. Not only do you get six issues of *Sketch Magazine*, which includes the Blue Line Pro Shop catalog - with exclusive collectibles and very affordable art supplies - each subscriber receive a **FREE "Club Blue"** membership, 15% off all your Blue Line art supply purchases, \$15 discount coupon toward your next art supply purchase, A **FREE** 20 word classified in each issue, **FREE "Club Blue"** members only merchandise and convention only collectibles for **"Club Blue"** members only and much more.

Sketch Magazine provides valuable information for comic book creators, including tips on writing, penciling, inking, lettering, computer coloring and other technical aspects of the comic profession.



SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

And Receive...

- \$15.00 Discount coupon for Blue Line art products.
- 15% Discount OFF of all your Blue Line art supply purchases.
- A **FREE** 20 word classified in each issue of Sketch Magazine you receive.
- **FREE "Club Blue"** membership.
- "Club Blue" members receive members only merchandise and convention only collectibles.

- ☐ \$35.70 inside U.S.
- ☐ \$49.00 Canada & Mexico
- ☐ \$98.00 Foreign

name _____

address _____

city _____

state _____ zip _____

phone _____

email _____

Send \$35.70 to: Sketch Magazine
8385 U.S. Highway 42, Florence, KY 41042
606-282-0096 / Fax: 606-282-9412
On-line: WWW.BLUELINEPRO.COM

WORLD FAMOUS COMICS

THE ULTIMATE COMIC BOOK AND ENTERTAINMENT WEBSITE!



www.wfcomics.com



FM International, Inc.
913 Stewart Street
Madison, WI 53713
608-271-7922
608-271-8143 fax
WWW.FMINTERNET.COM
questions@FMInternet.com

Carring the full line of Blue Line Art Products.
Wholesale Only.

COMIC BOOK WORLD

Comic Books • Trading Cards

Pokemon!™ We've always got it.

Role-Playing Games

FLORENCE • 7130 Turfway Road • 606-371-9562
CINCINNATI • 4016 Harrison Avenue • 513-661-6300

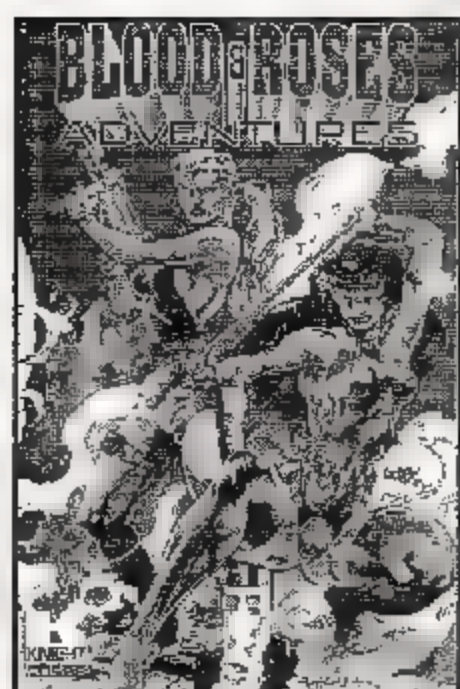


BRAINWALKER
by
Christopher Riley

Order issue #1
and #2 for Just \$3.00
+\$2.00 s&h

(((Look for issue #3 this Summer)))

Send Checks To
Christopher Riley
752 Peachtree Lane
Erlanger KY 41018



BLOOD & ROSES ADVENTURES
Trade Paperback
Signed by B&R creator
Bob Hickey
\$12.95 each
ONLY 200 available

Sacred Studios
8385 U.S. Highway 42
Florence, KY 41042
606-282-0096

**BLCOMICS FONT,
BALLOONS AND
BLSFX FONT FOR
\$19.95**

**BLCOMIC FONT
INCLUDES:
REGULAR,
BOLD,
ITALIC,
BOLD ITALICS**

Blue Line

WWW.BLUELINEPRO.COM / 606-282-0096
8385 U.S. Highway 42 Florence, KY 41042

Business Cards Advertising Rates: 1 issue \$50.00, 3 issues \$45.00 per, 6 issues \$40.00 per.

COMIC BOOK CONVENTIONS

Big Apple Comic Con N.Y.

St. Paul's Church Auditorium, New York, NY. Dates include March 10-11, July 8, September 15-16, and the National Show at the Metropolitan in Manhattan November 10-12. Big Apple Conventions Inc., 7405 Metropolitan Ave., Middle Village, NY 11379, Ph. (718) 326-2713.

Big Easy Comic-Con

May 26-28, 2000 New Orleans, LA. Organized by Contact R.A.P. Productions P.O. Box 3831, Mansfield, OH 44907-1427, Roger Price, Ph. (419) 526-1427, Fax. (603) 250-9252, Email, BIGEASYCON@WFCOMICS.COM Website, WWW.BIGEASYCON.COM.

Canadian National Comic Book Expo

August 25-27, 2000, at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. Contact: Aman Gupta, 4 Varisty Rd., Toronto, Ontario M6S 4N4 CANADA. Ph. (416) 761-1760, E-mail AGUPTA@HOBBYSTAR.COM, Website WWW.HOBBYSTAR.COM/COM.CEXPO

San Diego Comic Con International

July 22-23, 2000 at the San Diego Convention Center, San Diego, CA. Contact Fae Desmond, Comic-Con International P.O. Box 128458, San Diego, CA 92112-8458, Ph. (619) 544-9555, Fax. (619) 544-0743, E-mail CCIWEB@AOL.COM, Website WWW.COMIC-CON.ORG

Dragon Con

June 29-July 2 at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta, GA. Contact Ed Krammer, P.O. Box 47696, Atlanta, GA 30362-0696, Ph. (770) 925-0115, Fax. (770) 823-8321, E-mail EDKRAMER@AOL.COM, Website WWW.DRAGONCON.ORG

Heroes Convention

June 16-18, 2000 at the Charlotte Convention Center, Contact Shelton Drum, Heroes Convention 2000 P.O. Box 9181, Charlotte, NC 28299 Ph. (704) 375-7463, Fax. (704) 375-7464, Website WWW.HEROESONLINE.COM

Mega Con

March, 2000 at Orlando, FL, Contact Beth Widera, Mega Con, 4023 Tampa Road, Suite 2400, Oldsmar, FL 34677, Ph. (813) 891-1702, Fax. (813) 891-0542, E-mail MEGAON2000@MEGACONVENTION.COM, Website WWW.MEGAONVENTION.COM

Mid-Ohio-Con

November 25-26 2000 at Adam's Mark Hotel Columbus OH. Contact Roger Price, R.A.P. Productions P.O. Box 3831, Mansfield, OH 44907-3831, Ph. (419) 526-1427, Fax. (603) 250-9252, E-mail MIDOHIOCON@WFCOMICS.COM, Website, WWW.MIDOHIOCON.COM

Minnesota Comic Book Convention

MCBA Microcon April 30, 2000 and MCBA Falcon Sept. 16-17, 2000 in Bloomington, Minn. Contact Nick or Brian 5013 Grafton Ave. N., Oakdale, MN 55128, Ph. (612) 788-8191 Fax. (851) 228-3013, E-mail MNCBA@AOL.COM

Motor City Conventions, Inc.

Chicago Comicfest March 4-5 at Ramada Plaza Hotel O'Hara, IL. Motor City Comic Con May 19-21 at Nov. Expo Center, Nov., MI Contact Gary Bishop 19785 W. 12 Mile Rd., Suite 231, Southfield, MI 48076, Ph. (248) 426-8059, Fax. (248) 426-8064

Wizard World Chicago 2000

August 4, 5-6 at the Rosemont Expo Center in suburban Chicago. Contact: Brenda Cook 151 Wells Avenue, Congers, NY 10920, ph. (914) 268-8068, fax. (914) 268-8069. Website www.wizardworld.com

WonderCon

April 7-9, 2000 at the Oakland Convention Center, San Francisco Bay Area, CA. Contact Joe Field 2991 Shattuck Ave. #202, Berkeley, CA 94705. Ph. (925) 825-5410, Fax. (925) 825-5412 Website www.wondercon.com

Send your convention information to
Sketch Magazine 8385 U.S. Highway 42, Florence, KY 41042
or e-mail to skconventions@bluelinepro.com

CLASSIFIEDS

Sketch Magazine, the comic book industries magazine, announces that every classified word ad placed in this publication will appear on the Sketch Magazine website at www.bluelinepro.com. In addition to reaching your target audience through Sketch Magazine, your ads will also reach thousands more on the World Wide Web!

Classified advertising are 25¢ per word, with a \$4.00 minimum. Any space between letters begins a new word.

Classified display advertising.

Size	1x	3x	6x
Two inches	\$96.00	\$92.00	\$87.00
Three inches	\$169.00	\$161.00	\$153.00
Four inches	\$198.00	\$188.00	\$179.00

Classifications to choose from

2000 Announcements	2050 Inker Wanted
2005 Artist Wanted	2055 Letterers
2010 Art Supplies	2060 Miscellaneous
2015 Associations	2065 Original Artwork
2020 Books For Sale	2070 Penciler Wanted
2025 Books Wanted	2075 Printers
2030 Colorist	2080 Professional Services
2035 Color Separations	2085 Publishers
2040 Comics For Sale	2090 Services
2045 Comics Wanted	2095 Shows & Conventions

SKETCH MAGAZINE

8385 U.S. Highway 42, Florence, KY 41042
(606) 282-0096 Fax: (606) 282-9412
e-mail sketchad@bluelinepro.com
website: www.bluelinepro.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS 2000

ROX35 COMIX, An International Christian comics Training Ministry! Please see our web site for more details: <http://www.rox35.org>. Rox35 Media, Inc. 620 Richmond Drive, Albuquerque, NM 87106 (505) 232-3500 E-mail: rox35@rox35.org

ARTIST WANTED 2005

"**WRITER/INKER** looking for Penciler/Publisher to create comics with/for. A little pro experience looking for more exposure. Please contact me." Richard Gutierrez <http://fearstalker.tripod.com/richard.html> FearStalkerX@aol.com Tsunami Media Publications 12440 S.W. 107th Avenue Miami, Florida 33176 sohei@earthlink.net

LOOKING FOR artist to pencil and ink science fiction graphic novel. Concept similar to Space: Above & Beyond. Style: Marc Silvestri. Tsunami Media Publications 12440 S. W. 107th Avenue, Miami FL 33176 sohei@earthlink.net

LOOKING FOR inkers and background pencilers. Send submissions and SASE to Studio Archein PO Box 16582, Chicago, IL 60616-0582.

ARTISTS WANTED NOW FOR NEW COMIC SERIES Mad Beanz! is a new adventure comedy series that will start next year. Artists who participate in the project will be given a large percentage of profits and exposure. No experience required. Just take the Mad Beanz art test online at: www.victorian.fortunecity.com/lexington/613/arttests.htm Or write to: Smorgasbord Productions, P.O. Box 1384, La Mesa CA 91944. Also be sure to check out www.smorgasbordproductions.com

COMICS FOR SALE 2040

KABUKI For a **FREE** checklist of Kabuki back issues and ordering information please send your request to: ANH TRAN, PO BOX 19294, Cincinnati, OH 45219-0294. Email: ANH2TRAN@HOTMAIL.COM Also check out NOHTV.COM for the latest Kabuki news, message boards and links.

LETTERERS 2055

COMIC BOOK lettering that's fast, affordable and experienced. Visit <http://www.cueballproductions.webjump.com> or email cueprod@aol.com. Cueball Productions: For all your lettering needs. Michael Thomas 1309 NE 24th Portland, OR 97232 (503) 284-5288, cueprod@aol.com

WORK WANTED 2195

INKER, KUBERT School trained, seeking position. For samples contact Vic Miller, Sr. E-mail: vmillersr@earthlink.net, Fax: 856-933-1543, Phone: 856-933-7048.

SKETCH

SKETCH MAGAZINE SUBSCRIBERS
Remember you receive a **FREE** 20 word classified for each issue during your subscription.
Send your classified to:

Sketch Magazine

8385 U.S. Highway 42
Florence, KY 41042

or

Fax: (606) 282-9412

or

E-mail:

sketchclassifieds@bluelinepro.com

Printers Directory

BRENNER PRINTING CO.

1234 Tr plett, San Antonio, TX 78216,
Ph. (210) 349-4024, Fax (210) 349-1501 Website:
www.brennerprinting.com.

FREESPORT PRESS INC.

121 Main Street, Freeport, OH 43973,
Ph. (740) 658-3315, Fax (740) 658-3727

HAROLD BUCHHOLZ PRINTING SERVICES

1325 White Marlin Ln., Virginia Beach, VA 23464, Ph. (757) 467-0763, Fax (757) 467-0555 Website:
www.icomics.com/hbps

HEBDO LITHO INC.

8695 Le Creusot, St. Leonard, Quebec H1P 2A8, CANADA, Ph. (514) 955-5959, Fax (514) 955-8067

MORGAN PRINTING, INC.

402 Hill Ave, Grafton, ND 58237, Ph. (701) 352-0640, Fax (701) 352-1502, Website:
www.morganpublishing.com

NATIONAL LITHOGRAPHERS & PUBLISHERS INC.

7700 NW 37th Ave., Miami FL 33147 Ph. (305) 691-2800, (800) 446-4753 Fax: (305) 836-2579

PRENEY PRINTING LITHO

2714 Dougall Ave, Windsor ON Canada N9E 1R9 Ph. (519) 966-3412 Fax: (519) 966-4996 E-mail: preney@mnsi.net

PORT PUBLICATIONS INC.

125 E. Main St., P.O. Box 249, Port Washington, WI 53074, Ph. (414) 284-3494, Fax: (414) 284-0067

QUAD GRAPHICS

555 South 108th St., West Allis, WI 53214, Ph. (414) 566-6000

QUEBECOR PRINTING INC.

8000 Blaise-Pascal Ave., Montreal Quebec H1E 2S7 CANADA Ph. (514) 494-5400, Fax: (514) 881-0276

R.R. DONNELLEY & SONS

Donnelley Drive, Glasgow, KY 42141, Ph. (270) 678-2121

STEKETEE-VAN HUIS

13 W. 4th St., Holland, MI 49423 Ph. (616) 392-2326

Why does knowing how to work the elegance of a line in a drawing have anything to do with typography?

Designing Outside The Panel: How I Think About Design In Comics.

By Paul Sizer

Most of my adult life has been dedicated to trying to combine what I was always told shouldn't be combined. While for some this may be a case of loving that "bad" boy or girl, the one who wears the leather jacket or hangs out with the wrong crowd that smoked by the fence at the edge of the junior high school grounds, my forbidden romance comes from more familiar ground: the combining of the design

world and the art of comics.

Even though this is a bit of an exaggeration, it's not much of one. Many people are able somehow to segregate areas of artistic expression very easily, making the power of one area never influence another. This is a shame, because it is within the cross-over of artistic disciplines where innovations and new ideas spring. This idea is nothing new, the greatest leaps in advancing the comic medium have occurred when artists brought what worked in one medium over to their medium, from Eisner and Steranko introducing cinematic devices to the page, to the more recent infiltration of American comics with the power and skill of Japanese styles and methods.

How many current "hot" artists are deeply indebted to the stylistic finesse that manga has had for decades? More than probably realize it.

And it is within this attitude where many arguments against comics being a true art form stem.

Unfortunately, many comic artists don't take the time to find where their influences come from. I studied graphic design in college for 5 years, and big sections of my studies were devoted to making me aware of where modern design came from, where fonts came from, where styles emerged, and why they emerged.

Admittedly, at times I was not sure why a sense of history was so important in design. After all, I was designing for the future, not the past, wasn't I? Well, yes and no. I was falling prey to the segregation theory of the arts. Why should my knowledge of sculpture affect my design? Why does knowing how to work the elegance of a line in a drawing have anything to do with typography? The question really should have been why shouldn't they affect my design. The same decisions that make a painting successful affect what can make a design solution successful. Typography is affected by the same processes that make an artist choose one composition over another. As a designer, I use type, image and letterforms to compose ideas. I demand the same from those elements as I do the components of any comic panel I draw. My design must be as exciting as my best panels on a page, and conversely, my pages of comic art must have the same clarity, hierarchy and power that my best design work has. And with that realization, I suddenly found my cross-over, my combination of two artistic disciplines. Rather than working to find their differences, I could now work towards finding why they were really more the same. Now that the healing can begin, here's some basic rules I set for myself to make it all work.

As with most rules, they're made to be broken at times, but I've found these to be pretty tough and adaptable:

1. KEEP IT SIMPLE.

Sounds simple, doesn't it? Truth is, it's always hard to not throw on everything but the kitchen sink to a good simple idea. Strip it down. Ask yourself if you need everything you've included in a drawing or a design.

Most times people smother a perfectly good idea because they're afraid it doesn't look like it's complicated enough to warrant consideration. Simple, clean execution of a typographic solution usually yields a better end result. When I color work from professional comic artists doing pin-ups for my book, the most common request I receive is "Please, just keep it simple!"



LITTLE WHITE MOUSE



Icons and logotypes created for LITTLE WHITE MOUSE book.

2. TREAT TYPE LIKE A PERSON. Huh?

What I mean is, give your type and design the same importance that you assign to the characters in a panel. How do you make a character the focal point in a scene? Make your type and design elements act that same way, whether it be making some elements bigger and some smaller, or repeating things to achieve a feeling.

Also, look how letterforms are shaped and how the movements of the strokes that create them works. It's the same way a human figure has body language that conveys emotion and intent. A pointed finger directs the eye the same way the stroke of a letterform directs your eye to the next letter or next visual element.

3. MIX IT UP! Again with the combination talk.

Actually, this is more about being brave enough to experiment in a structured way. Going into a problem with the solution pre-visualized usually defeats the purpose of solving the problem. Don't treat everything the same way; give each problem it's own approach to being solved. Lots of times, my best solutions have come with switching how I choose to solve the problem. Type giving you trouble? Solve it through color decisions. Panel layout getting jumbled and unclear? Organize them in a typographic manner.

Giving yourself a nudge out of your standard problem solving mode will more than likely produce fresh, energized solutions.

4. RIGHT TOOL FOR THE JOB

A really hard hurdle to overcome is discovering that your tool of choice in art can't do everything you need it to do. Computers can do lots of really great stuff in comics and design, but if loading up an old brush with ink and whacking it against a piece of paper on the wall makes the mark you need, go for it! Use whatever gets the job done, be it digital or analog. All of my penciling and inking is done by hand, but all of my color work and design is done in the computer. Keeping a foot in both camps allows me some flexibility in deciding the best way to solve an artistic problem. Should I scan it and distort it, or push it around on the glass of a Xerox machine while it's copying? Both produce different results, one which will probably hit the mark.

5. SHOW SOME RESPECT.

Nothing kills a piece of art faster than neglecting a connected form of art. Akin to hanging a great picture in a crappy frame, I hate seeing good comic art "framed" by clumsy, badly thought-out or badly executed design. Put as much thought into how the type in your book complements the images around it.

Does it overpower the art, or fight for attention in the composition? Design is supposed to help convey information and concept, not to be an end in and of itself. If your design work dominates your art, something isn't right. As with most artistic solutions, giving elements some breathing room and letting them do what they do well will end up solving the problem. Show your art and your typography the respect they both deserve. So, where does that put you now? Well, as always, it puts me with the realization that I have a long way to go towards perfecting this synthesis of design and comics that floats around in my head. The best I hope for is to make my work better because of my effort trying to achieve this goal.

But isn't that the real reason any artist continues to work? Again, why should the ideals or aspirations of a comic artist or a designer be any different than a painter or sculptor? The answer is that they shouldn't be different, and in many cases, I think they should be even tougher and more future-reaching. In both design and comic art, it's very easy to slip into the rut of lowest common denominator thinking, letting what has gone before be the standard to which you rise. The challenge for me is to constantly ask myself if my ideas are good because they solve the problem I set for myself, or because they're finished. Believe me, it's like ripping out a floor of tiles because one isn't right, but all the artists I admire and look up to would do it in a heartbeat. Now that's discipline! Maybe not as cool as hanging out at the edge of the school property smoking, but didn't most of those kids end up with really lousy jobs and yellow teeth? I rest my case...

You can reach Paul at : pauls@bluelinepro.com



Logos for various incarnations of Sizer's design.

As a creator working for a small press publisher, you are more involved when it comes to producing your book.

Self-Publishing and Small Press Work

by Dan Souder

This chapter is for those of you who can't stand working for other people. You enjoy the rewards of sleeping until late afternoon, sticking to a schedule that you set for yourself, and having the creative freedom to do exactly what you want. Assuming you still want to work in the creative end of comics, you have a few choices.

The first is to lock yourself in the basement with a pencil, some paper, and a flashlight. The moody atmosphere will cause you to create the most warped, surreal, scary comics this side of Graham Ingels. Take your work over to the local printing business, run some copies, staple them together, and sell them at local conventions for \$.50 to \$1.00 a pop. Congratulations, you've just completed your first mini-comic.

At conventions, you're going to run into some publishers that aren't as recognized or don't have the cash flow of the larger ones. These are the small press companies. They work much the same way that the bigger publishers do, just scaled down a bit.

Finally, for the true do-it-yourself-er, the self-publishing route offers complete creative control of your work. Basically, it's up to you. Everything. Paying the bills, soliciting new issues, changing the page count, writing the indicia, and so on. Self-publishing demands that you assume the mantle of every single job in a company while still finding time to create. You deal with many hassles, especially at first. The long-term rewards, however, more than make up for it.

Small Press

Small press publishers are comic book companies with a structure that resembles a mid-range or large publisher more than a self-publisher. I'm including them with the self-publishers because of their proximity in size and the features that set them apart from their larger counterparts. These guys usually publish somewhere between two and ten titles a month, a far cry from the 50-75 (or more) published

each month by the Big Two. I'm going to focus on these differences in describing the unique world of the small press publisher.

Brief Overview

As a creator working for a small press publisher, you are more involved when it comes to producing your book. Most small press publishers only employ a handful of personnel to handle every facet of the business, which makes for busy people who may not have the time to guide your creation every step of the way. For a writer, it translates into more freedom in controlling the direction of your book, your story ideas, and your future plans for the characters. If the editor has his hands full contacting fanzines for advertising rates and laying out the letter column in another book, he isn't going to have as much time to quibble over every little detail in yours. It may be proofread, and that's it.

The same holds true for pencilers, inkers, letterers, and colorists. Although it is checked to make sure that Mrs. Montezuma's sash wraps around her left shoulder in each panel and not her right, the penciler's stylistic nuances may be of a lesser concern. This is a big plus for many creators who are tired of "editorial interference" in larger companies, but who don't want to shoulder the responsibility that comes with self-publishing.

Because a small press publisher is on a tighter budget than the Big Two, its titles are usually published on a bi-monthly basis. Publishing every other month saves on printing expenses, especially with the ever-increasing cost of paper. Not as many issues of a particular title are published in a year—six if the creative team can stay on schedule. A bi-monthly schedule won't hurt you. Comics readers who buy independent titles are accustomed to a two month wait between issues.

I'm going to harp on this even more when it comes to self-publishing, but the single most important responsibility of the creative team is to keep up with the deadlines. Fans regularly purchase bi-

monthly books, but they also regularly lose interest and drop books that are supposed to be on a bi-monthly schedule but only come out four times a year. If you want to keep your readers, don't insult them. You've promised your fans that your book will be out every other month, so move heaven and hell to keep your word. With the low circulation of some small press titles, a consistent schedule can mean the difference between a profit or a loss.

The industry standard for packaging the small press book is to have black and white interiors with a color front cover. Black and white interior pages save money. The publisher could go with a black and white cover as well, but in Advertising we discussed how well color catches the eye—thus a color cover is essential to help the book get noticed on a rack crowded with many other titles. The price for a color cover is usually worth the extra sales that are gained, and it makes for a more attractive package.

Payment

When it comes to payment, creators working for the small press have three options. The first one is the page rate, the standard method of payment by most publishers in the field. Rates vary, depending on the creator's experience and popularity and how much the company is willing to spend. If you're an inker who gets \$50 per page and the book is 22 pages long, you're going to pocket \$1100 (before taxes) for that month. If you have time to ink two books a month, that's double the money. Not too shabby.

Another method of payment is much less certain. The company pays the creator on a royalties only basis—the amount of profit the book makes determines how much money you make. You aren't guaranteed to make any money whatsoever on the book. Generally, the profits are split up on a percentage basis—say, the company gets 50%, the writer 15%, the penciler 15%, and the inker and letterer 10% each. The way that the percents are broken down is purely arbitrary and is usually negotiated before a contract is

signed. If you feel like you deserve more money, go ahead and ask for it—you may not get it—but go ahead and ask for it.

And then some small press publishers may opt to pay their creators by combining the former methods, which is standard practice for the larger publishers. Creators receive a page rate up front and then royalties based on how well the book sells. This option, however, is rare among small press publishers.

Counting on your book selling enough copies to pay for your last car accident isn't a good idea. Hatching chickens and all that. Most creators who don't have gambling disorders realize this and make sure they have something else to fall back on. You should, too.

Ownership

Along with method of payment, creators have two options when it comes to the ownership of the work they do. The first option is work-made-for-hire. Here, the contract you sign guarantees the publishing company you work for will own everything you do, including the stories themselves and the characters you create. If you want to reprint your work sometime down the road, you must first ask the company's permission because they hold the copyright. Neglecting to do so will land you in a heap of legal trouble.

Several years ago, a big controversy started when Jack Kirby, co-creator of many of Marvel's staple characters, asked for his original artwork back and was refused. The industry went bananas over the issue, and a number of people sympathized with Kirby, asserting that it was morally wrong to withhold the work he created. Nevertheless, the morality of the issue was more or less a moot point because Kirby signed a contract years ago that gave Marvel the ownership of everything he did. According to the letter of the law, he couldn't do anything, although he eventually got some of it back. The moral of the story is to make sure you understand what you're doing when you sign that contract.

The other option available is to have a creator-owned project, which makes you the owner and copyright holder of all the work you produce for the company. Creators who work for small publishers have the opportunity to design their own characters as well. The publisher is responsible for publishing the work and therefore receives a cut of the profits. Again, the exact numbers are negotiated when the contracts are signed. As the owner, you may reprint your work whenever you like (assuming you have the funds) and

can even switch publishers if you feel that the one you're using does a poor job. The publisher has the final say on whether or not to accept your proposal as a creator-owned project. Of course, if you don't like its answer, you can always self-publish.

Differences from Larger Publishers

Small press titles usually avoid the dreaded fill-in issue. This nasty little number happens when a member of the regular creative team misses a deadline and the editor, in her rush to get the book out on time, farms out the work to someone else to meet the deadline. Even fans who buy the comic because they love the main character get used to reading the work of a certain creative team. The fans are miffed when they open the issue at home only to discover a bunch of unfamiliar names created a plot that has nothing to do with the established continuity of the story. Think these fans will think twice when it comes time to buy it again next month? You bet. Small press titles are generally blessed with a strong creator vision that makes allowing a stranger handle the characters unthinkable.

Because small press titles don't sell as many copies as ones from the Big Two, creators working for royalties who don't live in the magic land of daytime TV accept the fact that their title probably won't sell well, especially starting out. Therefore, their work becomes a labor of love—they create for the pure joy of creating. Their stories have a special quality that isn't always found in titles from bigger publishers, whose creators are assured of a paycheck. This is not to say that most creators working for bigger publishers are greedy and only do it for the money. I am merely pointing out that if you do comics knowing that the chances of getting paid are slim, then the main reason you keep doing it is the enjoyment you get out of it. The fans will notice the amount of care you put into your stories—don't think you can just hack something out and have your sales figures remain stable.

The final difference that I want to touch on is the wide range of genres that is found in small press titles. This variety is not exclusive to the small press, Dark Horse being a notable example, but it is more common. Some small press publishers specialize in one particular genre while others diversify. A glance through the titles offered by these companies reveals slice of life, manga, humor, romance, detective, horror, cartoon, surreal, fantasy, and other genres as diverse as your imagination. A serious look at a small press publisher might not lead to a pencil-

ing assignment, but it will open your eyes to a variety of material that you may not have been exposed to before. As you grow creatively, your work improves. The next letter you receive from a publisher won't be a rejection form. It'll be a job offer instead.

Self-Publishing

If you enjoy a big challenge, well, it doesn't get any bigger than self-publishing in the comic book industry. Self-publishing means running your own business. But before that becomes necessary, you have to have a comic book to publish. For some, the work needed to do a comic is the most difficult task of all.

Meeting Deadlines

Because self-publishers usually handle both the writing and illustrating chores, they are the only ones to take the blame when something isn't finished on time. It's their responsibility. Everyone knows that finding time to relax in front of the boob tube each day is difficult enough, much less what's needed to finish a couple of pages of comics. Nevertheless, it has to be done. Day in, day out. You can take the weekends off if you want to, but only if you're ahead of the game come Friday. If goofing off all day Saturday is going to put you behind schedule, you'll have to work that much harder in the coming week to catch up. Anyone who's tried can tell you that once you fall off the deadline express, getting back on is nearly impossible.

Dave Sim advocates doing one complete page per day for a monthly book. That includes scripting, penciling, lettering, and inking it. If you can do more, great. If this gives you some trouble and all you can manage is one finished page every other day, that's okay. It just means that your book will come out on a bi-monthly schedule instead. As with small press publishers, a bi-monthly schedule is fine for self-publishers because it is also the industry standard.

Again, if you promise that your book will come out on a bi-monthly schedule, you better be certain that you finish a page every other day. Otherwise, you're digging a hole for yourself from the start. The main thing is to note your progress for the first month. Be realistic in your expectations for your output. If it takes you more than a couple of days to do a complete page, then you may want to set a quarterly (four times per year) schedule for your book. No matter what kind of a schedule you set for yourself, **make sure you stick to it.** Got it?

The best way to keep up is to develop

a routine. If you're a morning person, turn the answering machine on and get to work before Farmer Brown goes out to milk Bessie. Short breaks are okay, but they should be restricted to ten minutes or so at the most. Take a little longer for lunch, or better yet, eat and work at the same time. Just be careful not to spill anything on your artwork. If your idea of early is the noon newscast, start then but work until late evening.

How many hours you work each day is based on whatever you're comfortable with, but I suggest making it at least a regular eight-hour workday. You must maintain whatever hours you set for yourself every day. Starting in the morning one day and the afternoon the next will only encourage laziness. A routine, on the other hand, is conducive to keeping up a high level of production. You'll get used to the routine soon enough, and thoughts of "oh gee, I just don't feel like doing any work today" evaporate quickly.

As I've pointed out more than once, the market for comic books right now is precarious at best. New titles have a bad reputation in the eyes of the industry. A number of them are late, and some wind up not coming out at all. Retailers are well aware of this stigma and generally place conservative orders (if they order at all) for unproven titles. You're up against this stereotype as a self-publisher. To overcome it you must create a good reputation for yourself as both a creator and businessperson.

Unfortunately, reputations aren't made overnight. They take a while. Thus, while you're busy producing your work on time and being professional in your business dealings, retailers are ordering conservatively on your title. They'll up their orders once you create a solid fan base with a recognizable demand, but until then you shouldn't expect your orders to be too high. Here's where that good savings and fall-back work comes into handy. As long as you keep up your end of the deal, you'll weather the initial storm and be on your feet in no time.

Getting Started

Let's take a look at how to run your fledgling company. The first thing to do is secure a copyright of your work. You need to acquire Form VA from the United States Copyright Office. See the attached address book for information on contacting it, paying the fee, and so on. If the title has already been copyrighted, you're out of luck, and you'll have to hit the old Webster's to find a different one. Otherwise, you'll be registered as the copyright

holder, the only person able to publish under that title. If someone has the gall to publish something with your title, you can win major bucks through our fine judicial system.

Assuming that issue one is finished, now's the time to find a printer. For a handy list of printers that are accustomed to handling comic book jobs, see the enclosed booklet filled with current information. Here you'll find the address, name, and telephone number of the contact for several printers. Rates and minimum print runs vary, so call around to see which best fits your budget. Also, talk to other self-publishers in the field to find out which printers they use. Besides the cost of printing, you'll also have to pay for the color separations (for your cover) and shipping. Not surprisingly, no amount of cajoling will convince your printer to ship your books to the distributors for free. Therefore, expect your final printing bill to be more than the cost of printing itself. You can also pay a delivery service to ship the books to the distributors if it charges less than the printer would.

When deciding how long your comic will be, remember that printers work in increments of eight—8, 16, 24, 32, and so on. The standard size of a comic book is 32 pages, not including the cover. Comics that are 24 and 40 pages long are also found with some regularity. When laying out your book, allot enough space for the story, letter column, ads, and anything else you want to include, but be sure that the final count is in these increments.

One other thing to keep in mind when it comes to printers is that they aren't editors or psychics. They accept no responsibility for typos in your work. They merely stick whatever you send them on the press and run it. So be careful when editing your book, or that one little mistake will be repeated thousands of times. Also, never assume that the printer "knows what you mean." In fact, assume nothing. Unless you spell it out for them, even if it would make sense to a blind 4-year-old, it will be ignored. Be precise in your instructions.

Once you have a printer lined up, solicit your book to the distributors. A list of current distributor addresses, contacts, and phone numbers is included in the booklet. A solicitation simply means that you're telling the distributor that you want to make the latest issue of your title available to the retailers. Include all pertinent information about your book with the solicitation—title, issue number, list of cre-

ators, color or black and white, price, mini-series (if applicable), number of pages, and a little spiel that briefly describes the story. All of this runs in the distributor's catalogue so that the retailer knows what he'll get before he gets it. For a brand new comic, the distributor will probably want to see a complete photocopy of it, which gives assurance that your book will ship when promised. Also, add your company information so the distributor can contact you.

One common misconception is how much money you make off your comic. Most independent black and white comics have a cover price of \$2.25-\$2.95, but this price is what the reader pays. The distributor wants to make money off your work, so be prepared to offer the standard 65% discount. For a \$2.95 title, you'll actually make \$1.03 per issue. That seems harsh, but everyone has to deal with it, and so do you. The distributors in turn offer a lesser discount to the retailers so they can make some money, too.

The solicitation process takes four months, so if you want your first issue to come out in June, be ready to solicit in March. Your solicitation appears in the April edition of the distributor catalogues. Retailers receive them and place their orders in May. The distributor receives the orders and mails you a purchase order within a couple of weeks. The purchase order tells you exactly how many copies of your book it wants. You use this to determine the number of copies you have printed. Then your book ships from the printer to the distributor's warehouses. Don't forget to mail out an invoice to the distributor, separately, so you get paid. By now June has arrived, and your book is delivered to all of the retailers that ordered it. Careful planning and organization is a must when working this far ahead.

Nevertheless, occasionally you'll be hit with an unexpected circumstance that may cause your book to be late. Lateness can occur at any one of these stages. You come down with the flu for two weeks, so the printer receives your book late. This pushes everything back, and the book ends up not coming out until July. This situation is not good. Besides breaking your promise to your fans, the distributor may slap an extra charge on you for your tardiness. You'll get hit with an even bigger fee if you cancel your orders for the issue in order to resolicit it at a later date. Your lateness makes them look bad, so distributors don't mess around.

You won't be able to prevent every eventuality, but try your absolute best to keep your schedule. It saves you money.

Being Successful

I assume that you want to have some degree of success with your endeavor. That's understandable. As you know, the first thing you need is (altogether now) a consistent production schedule. Your motto should be "on time, every time." Along with this, you also need to keep your work available. If you sell out of one issue, you need to do a second printing in order to fill the demand. A fan could hear about your book and look for it, but if she's unable to find it anywhere, she could lose interest.

Be sure that any retailer that wants copies of your book gets them. If retailers are having trouble getting it through their distributors, offer to sell them copies directly. You should, however, only do this as a last resort so that you stay on good terms with the distributors. The last thing they want is competition from you. It becomes a matter of diplomacy. Finally, you need to advertise and promote your work. For tips on doing this successfully, see Chapter 6. It takes a combination of all three of these measures to have a successful title. If you neglect even one for a short period of time, your chances of being successful are that much lower.

As with everything else, juggling these three points isn't always as easy as it appears. Take the problem of keeping all of your issues in circulation. As demand begins to grow on your book, your back issues become scarce. Now's the time to do that second printing, trade paperback collection, or starter pack. The envelope in your mail isn't a million dollar sweepstakes offer but another printing bill. Coming up with the money for it isn't always easy, especially if you need to ship the new issue of your title that same month. You don't want to break yourself to pay for both bills, but you don't want to leave your readers wanting, either. Hence the problem.

One thing you can do is visit local banks in your area to try to open a line of credit or take out a loan. This means going deeper into debt for a few months until your purchase orders cover what you owe. Of course, if orders are lower than you expected and you're still in debt even after receiving the purchase order, your problem's compounded.

An alternative to debt is finding some other work to do in your free time. Use

what you make here to cover those pesky printing bills. You could find a job flipping burgers somewhere, become a pet psychologist, go on game shows, try to get some work in design or advertising, or accept a short-term assignment from a different publisher. The drawback is the juggling act you'll have to do—taking care of your new responsibilities on top of running your company.

A subscription service is another good way to make extra income. You receive more money per issue since you don't have to worry about offering substantial discounts. Any money that comes in is yours to keep. Be certain to promote your subscription service in the pages of your own book.

Another suggestion is to sell your original artwork. I understand that you're attached to those pages that you perspired over, but many collectors go ga-ga over original artwork and are willing to pay top dollar for it. You might not want to do it, but if it makes the difference between getting that starter pack together or having your work remain unavailable, you ought to just tightly close your eyes and go through with it. Keeping the original artwork to use for reprints later isn't necessary as long as you hang onto the negatives that the printer sends back to you—these are all they need to print from again. Or, you can always create your own scheme for making the money. Just don't break any laws. Remember, pyramid schemes are illegal.

Taking care of the retailers is important. Get on friendly terms with them—make sure they know who you are and what you do. Again, refer to Chapter 6 for advice on how to hobnob with them and, in doing so, promote your book. Try to organize those retailers that back your work and sell the most of it into a network—a force of stores that heavily promote your book to the public. When the network is large enough, the industry will begin to take notice. A network spreads the word and increases the sales on your book as other retailers begin to pick it up. Doing special store signings is a good way to bring attention to both your work and the retailer.

Obedying the Law

Now that you're in charge of your own business, you're going to have to deal with certain legalities. The first thing that comes up is taxes, the one thing that ruins the Easter holiday for most Americans. Tax laws are constantly changing and

vary from state to state, so instead of offering some advice here, I'm going to direct you to your local tax office or accounting firm for information (I never claimed to be a certified public accountant).

Describe your business to them and see what they have to say. Follow their directions **to the letter**—you don't want your friendly neighborhood I.R.S. auditor to come calling unless she has a refund check in her hand. Your best bet is just to hire someone to take care of it for you. The same goes for obtaining a legal permit to become a business. Find out the proper way of doing things—now's not the time to "wing it." If you do something without knowing the law, then you're probably breaking it.

What This Means for You

Many creators got their start working for small press publishers. You can make a name for yourself this way. Plus, it helps you prove yourself, so when you're ready to pitch your work to a larger publisher, you can place the evidence of what you're capable of doing directly into an editor's hand. You're a grizzled veteran who has learned the ropes and who is now ready to hit the big time. But you don't have to do it this way—many creators enjoy working for small press publishers and do so for the majority of their careers. It just depends on what you want for yourself.

As I mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, self-publishing is difficult and setbacks happen often when you're starting out. You don't want to jump into self-publishing blind. After studying this book, go out and pursue even more information before you begin. Hit the library, read industry publications, talk to other self-publishers, and learn as much as you can. Find out everything you can about publishing and distribution in the current market. Notice the mistakes that others have made and avoid them. You're not ready until you can honestly say to yourself that you're an expert on the comics industry. Being a bona fide expert saves a lot of time and trouble later. Don't let yourself get discouraged easily. Above all, stay focused. You'll do fine.

You can contact Dan at:
dans@bluelinepro.com

For more comic book business information check out "**A Guide To The Comic Book Business**" by Dan Souder. Published by Blue Line.

What is Manga?

Graphic storytelling is a respected and centuries-old art form in Japan, and since the end of World War II, comic books-known in Japan as "manga"- have remained the country's dominant medium of entertainment. Over a period of at least the last twenty years, Manga has become increasingly popular with international-and especially American audiences.

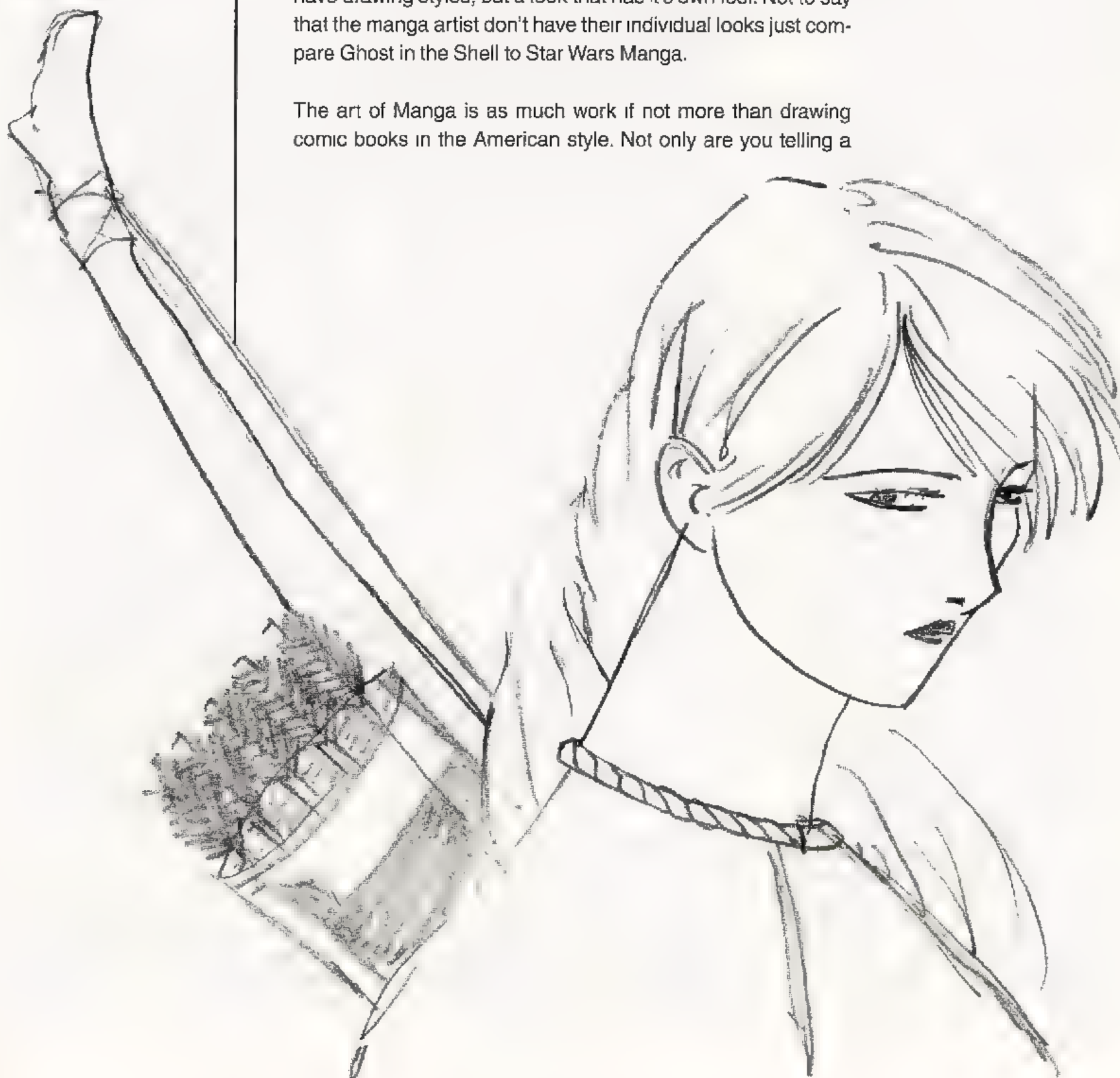
One of the most attractive features of manga for Japanese readers is the wide variety of topics the medium embraces. At newsstands throughout Japan, readers can find manga based on popular sports, historic events, racy adult fun, thought-provoking science fiction and literally anything imaginable.

(Dark Horse Comics...)

Manga Art.

The manga art has a style, not like how Jim Lee or John Byrne have drawing styles, but a look that has it's own feel. Not to say that the manga artist don't have their individual looks just compare Ghost in the Shell to Star Wars Manga.

The art of Manga is as much work if not more than drawing comic books in the American style. Not only are you telling a



story but you've got to keep the look that has been established as manga. Manga is supposed to read in 15 to 20 seconds per page, and not lavished over like many American comics such as Fathom or Battle Chasers. It is usually the vision of one writer but illustrated by many. Certain artist will illustrate a certain aspect of a scene such as backgrounds, automobiles or buildings.

Drawing

With this first article we are going to go over a few of the common aspects of Manga art and show how a character can be designed. Remember Manga is an overall look you can still stylize with your own drawing techniques.



The Face.

Most faces have a narrow chin with large rounded eyes. The hair is usually used to distinguish the characters from one another.



The Body.

This is where you can really add your own details to your character. Most females are drawn with narrow hips and long legs. The upper section can be determined depending on what type of character you are drawing. Males are usually slender unless it is a character trait to be large. Like most American comics the costume makes the character. So when designing your character be sure to have a recognizable costume.

Next time large Robots and Super Deformed...

Hand lettering is a lost art...

by Ward LeRoc

With the many font styles that are being offered to use on a computer and the ability to make changes quickly we've had to learn to use a computer or clean-up eraser stubble's all day. Don't get me wrong computers are faster, cleaner and much easier to make a change or move a balloon. It's just that lettering alone is a function of making a comic book, but where you can add some of your own talent to a project is along with lettering offer packaging and create cool sound effects and special effects, just be creative. So in this article we'll be pertaining to lettering on a computer. In future articles will discuss how to create sound effects and save them, creating our own word balloons and modifying the ones you have, merging our lettering to the finished artwork whether it be b&w or colored and finding good fonts.

The equipment that you'll need; a computer PC or Mac, a scanner at least 8 1/2 x 14, a device to save your art work to zip drive or cd burner, software Photoshop, Corel Draw, Illustrator etc. If you decide to print out your word balloons and paste them onto the original artwork (consult the artist) you'll need xacto knife and rubber cement, rubber cement pick up and a T-square.

First we'll discuss creating the lettering and balloons then we can talk about how to attach the lettering to the artwork, digitally or hand-pasting.

**WATCH THE EDGES
OF THE BALLOON.
MAKE SURE YOUR
TEXT DOESN'T TOUCH.**

I use a PC but many of you may have Mac's most programs run about the same on either. Corel Draw is a program that I use for lettering, sound effects and logo design. They have it for PC and Mac's also. You can export your text, balloons or logos as .ai or .esp files. Then import the file into Photoshop and place it over the artwork on a new layer. Be sure to have the balloons filled in white with the text on top. Also use bold text when bolding and not the line thickness tool in Corel. We'll talk more about this later.

To begin you'll need to scan the pages that you receive, if you are given files that are already colored or the colorist has already scanned the pages then this saves you a step. Many times the letterer and the colorist are given the b&w pages at the same time so they can both be working on them. Then the lettering is added to the colored artwork later.

When you scan be sure to scan each page to the exact size that they are to be printed. Allow for full bleed pages or panels that are suppose to be trimmed. If in doubt talk to your editor and artist. If you're scanning the pages that will be used to printing the comic book then be sure to scan them no less then 220 dpi. most times we scan ours at 300 dpi. this keeps the line art very clean and allows easy transfer of our text to the page. Keep an eye on your brightness controls sometimes you can lose details if it's turned up to much or you can pick up a lot of junk if it's turn down to low. Play around with it to get the best scan without doing much cleanup or losing any line art. To save precious time you'll want to take each page of artwork and resave it at 72 dpi. under a new name (example: pg#1.tif rename to pg#1-72.tif.) this shouldn't change the actually size of the page but it will make redraws much faster and allow you to letter more quickly.

Tip.. when exporting your text files from Corel place a box around the page edge. This will keep your fonts /balloons from being trimmed in the exporting stage. Once you import your file click on the box and delete it. In Corel import your 72 dpi page. (If you are going to paste your lettering on the original artwork you'll want to enlarge the page image to the exact size of the original artwork. This will allow you to letter with a larger font that can be reduced down with the artwork) Then place a box around the outer edge of the page. This is to keep your lettering and balloons on the outer edge of the page from being slightly trimmed when you export you file. Balloons that can be imported can also save a lot

on time. Many fonts come with balloons that are .ai or .eps. In Corel an .eps balloon can be modified to any shape or size by using the nodes tool without losing its line thickness.

Corel is object oriented which means the balloon is one item and the words are another this helps when your fitting text into a tight place.

Don't be afraid to put the balloon on top of the artwork. This sound simple but the balloons and text should go along with the artwork and help the story move forward. Placing balloons between characters is not a problem. If your not sure where to place your balloons then check your favorite book and see how they handled a tough situation.

Fonts and sizes.

Many books have created their own font styles to be used for them and many letters have had font styles created with their hand lettering. But their are fonts available on the market that look like hand lettering and work very well with most programs. Once you've found the font that your projects will be lettered then you've got to decide on what size of lettering. When sizing the best is for you and your editor/publisher to go back to your pile of comics and find a few books that you both like the lettering in. Remember easy to read. Not to small, Not to fancy. Once you've found a book check the font size. Sometimes a font will measure out at one size but when you type it and print it out it may look larger or smaller so once you've found a size that you like then type several different balloons with a couple lines in them. Make one smaller then the size you liked and one larger and one the same. Now print them out and hold them over the book and pick the one you think is the closes. Also look for line spacing and kerning. Line spacing is the amount of space between the lines of text do you have enough or too much. This can be easily adjusted. Kerning is the space between letters are your letters touching or are they too far apart you can also adjust this. Many times the default of most types work the best. (If you are pasting your text to the original artwork. You'll need to take the comic book page that you like the best for text and enlarge it on a copier. Black and white is fine we are more interested in the text size. Enlarge it to the same size of your original artwork. remember this comic is already trimmed so allow for this if yours will be trimmed. Now do the task about with trying different sizes until you've found the one that you want also allow a thicker border around your balloon.)

When you have finished your page of lettering and added all your sound effects as needed then your ready to export your page.

Next time....

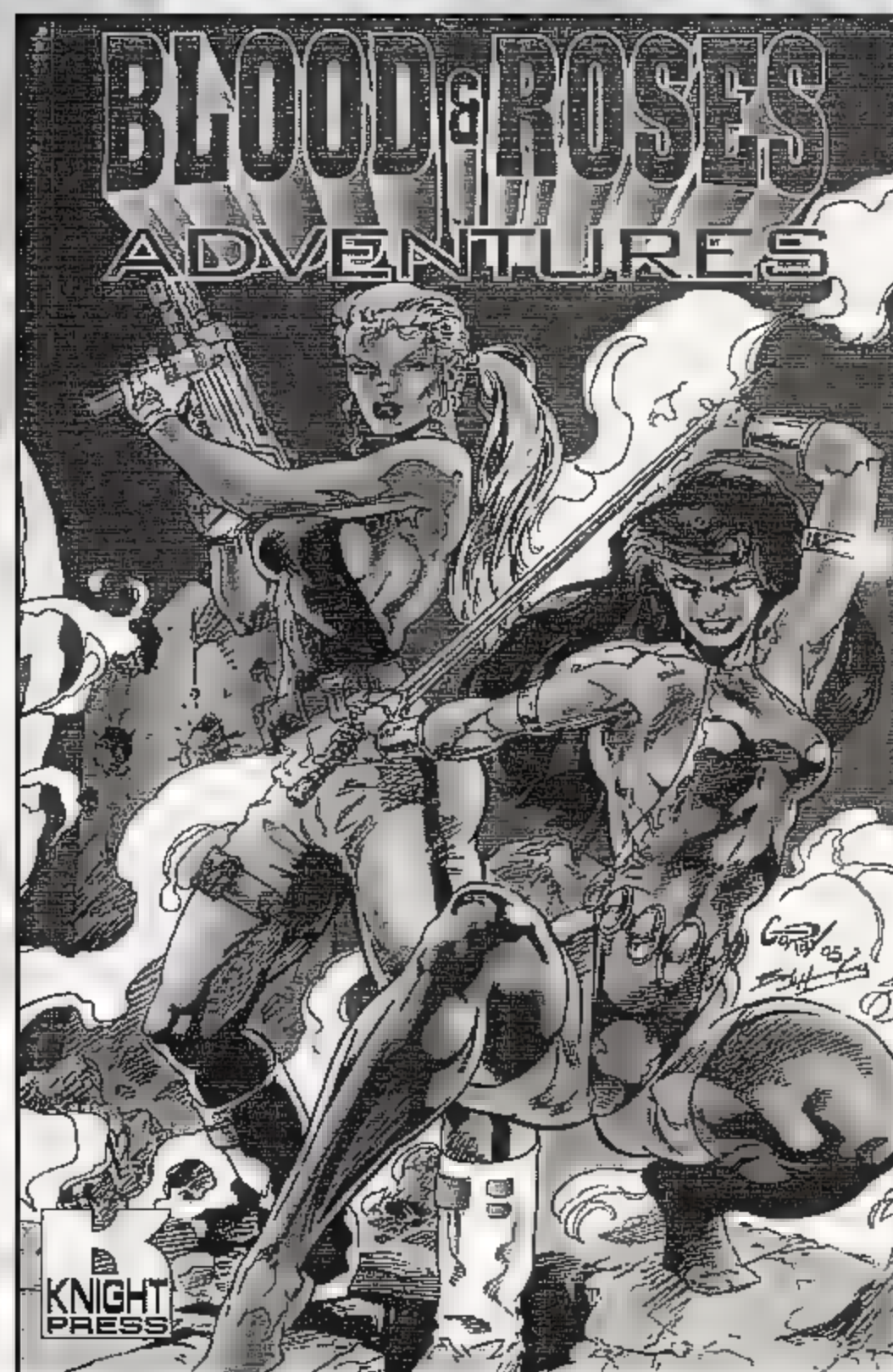
Importing balloons, aligning text, making sound effects...

Ward can be reached at wardl@bluelinepro.com

or at Lettering c/o Sketch Magazine, 8385-A U.S. Highway 42, Florence KY 41042

BLOOD & ROSES

IF YOU MISSED IT THE FIRST TIME!
HERE'S YOUR CHANCE
TO GET ON BOARD!
BEFORE IT BEGINS - AGAIN!



BLOOD & ROSES Trade Paperback 1

Collects the first two mini-series. BRTPB1 \$12.95

Blood & Roses

Future Past Tense

B. Hickey & B. Gorby

#1	\$3.00
#1 Gold Edition	\$10.00
#2	\$3.00

Blood & Roses

Search For The Time-Stone

B. Hickey, J. Smith, G. Gonzales

#1	\$3.00
#2	\$3.00

Blood & Roses

Adventures...

B. Hickey, B. Nichols, J. Corroney,
M. Hester

#1	\$3.00
#2	\$3.00
#3	\$3.00

Blood & Roses Special

B. Hickey, B. Nichols, J. Corroney,
M. Hester

#1	\$3.00
----	--------



For more information:

SACRED STUDIOS

8285 U.S. Highway 42, Florence, KY 41042

(606) 282-0096 Fax: (606) 282-9412

WWW.SACREDSTUDIOS.COM

Believe me, no publisher is going to waste his time jacking you around. If they're sending you sample work, there is a reason.

Submissions:

by Gary Reed

If you're like many fans and budding writers and artists, the first time you submit your work, there is a heavy dose of anticipation when you deposit your submission into the mail box for the first time. That, of course, is followed by an agonizing wait.

Although each company is very different in how they handle submissions, there are some general guidelines that you will likely be coming across (or perhaps coming up against). There isn't a standard across the industry so what applies to one company may not apply to another. I can only give you my perspective from Caliber Comics but I'll try to be a bit broader to incorporate other companies' views as well.

First off, everyone realizes how much work went into the submission and even a casual dismissal of someone's work still has a tinge of sympathy.

Secondly, and this is very crucial, most companies are in the production of comics, not to review potential comics. I can't tell you how many times we get a submission and someone wants critiques. Sorry, we just don't have the time to go through 100's of submissions and explain what the faults were. I don't think any company can do that.

And third, it comes down to a numbers game. Today's market is much smaller than it was a few years ago. There just isn't the room out there for new projects like before, so consequently, that means less titles published and less talent used. That also means that you're not just competing with other newbies looking to break in...you're competing with professionals who have had their regular outlets cut out from them and are now competing with you for the few jobs out there.

Gone are the days when publishers like Caliber, Slave Labor, Fantagraphics and many others judged potential series as a couple of criteria. "Do I like this?" and "Does

this deserve to be published?" Those were some of the most important aspects to evaluate and sales were considered but not in the dominating way it is now. Today's market for new properties is almost purely based on sales. It isn't that publishers are more mercenary these days, it is just that the market is so weak that even titles that look like they might have a chance of selling are marginal hopes.

So, what does that mean for the budding creator? It means a lot of things. It's doubtful that a creator can launch a title that spotlights his/her unique vision as the major appeal of the property. It must now, first and foremost, be a commercial property. You notice that I switched gears and started calling them properties...because that's what they are nowadays. Properties. It conjures up an ugly and capitalistic image. But don't fool yourself, it has been and always will be a capitalistic venture. It used to have more room for artistic creativity...but that was because that was what was commercial at the time. It wasn't a sense of altruism on the publishers' part...just capitalization of a different sort.

To understand how publishers view submissions, you have to ask yourself quite a few questions...much as the publishers do. Upon receiving submissions, publishers evaluate, almost innately, the following questions. Is it good? Yes, that still is the most dominant question. And you would be not just amazed but stunned by the number of bad submissions that come in. Again, I can only judge by what Caliber receives. I couldn't even fathom

what Marvel, DC, and Image must get. I'd guess that 75% of what comes in is just pure crap. I don't mean that the artist needs work or is just short...I mean pure crap. My eight-year-old daughter's drawings would be in the middle of the pack as far as artwork goes. I know. I know, you think it's an exaggeration...but trust me, it's not. If your drawings were in a comic on the shelf...would you buy it? If the answer is no, then why would you think someone else would?

Do they know our market? This is probably the most frustrating area. Most of the submissions we receive are for full color superhero books that will need years to get through the storyline proposed. Take a look at what we produce. Now, tell me why someone would think we'd jump all over something like that (providing they made it through the first question, which sad to say, is very, very rare.) Would Marvel be interested in a half-horse/half-man that has space adventures? No. But I can only guess how many submissions similar to that they must receive. Blanket submissions do not work for all publishers and are just a waste of time for the most part...for everyone.

Do they know our titles and existing creators? We publish a variety of different types of books and it is important for fledgling fans to understand the nature of those titles. Is the book based around a single creator? If so, don't bother. For example, on Little White Mouse which is written, illustrated, lettered, and everything else done by Paul Sizer (and who owns the property), why would someone submit a storyline utilizing those characters? When Sandman was being published by DC you can imagine how many people submitted



Sandman stories. Right, like they were going to bump out Gaiman. But we get material like that all the time. On company owned titles, you have your best shot as more than likely it isn't a single writer or artist who is attached to that property. But you have to know and understand how a title works and you had better ensure that you're consistent with the characters existing. Most of the writers that send us submissions are so off base on the characterizations, we wonder if they ever actually read the books.

What are they trying to do? If you're sending in samples to get any kind of work, that's one thing. Then, the submission is usually judged on the merit alone and evaluated to see if there is a spot. For larger companies, new talent is unlikely to be given a big character/title and write, pencil, and ink the entire project. For smaller companies, there is a better chance. Most of the submissions we receive are for creator owned projects. That's fine. But if it is a creator owned project, you have to look at what is in it for the publisher. There is nothing there but profit on the sales. (There's that commercial thing again.) A great concept that could make great toys, movies, games, etc. is totally irrelevant if it is creator owned. That was a lesson that Caliber like so many other companies learned the hard way. It comes down to "what's in it for us?" Sorry, but that is just the way it is. Do they have an idea of the existing marketplace? Most submitters have no idea of how small the comics market is. That is certainly understandable for those who are passionate about the industry and revel in it, seldom look at the overall big picture. But one thing is for sure...there isn't a lot of rich people in comics...especially in today's market. I cringe whenever I receive a letter from someone making good money in teaching, industrial design, writing novels, or graphic arts- who want to give it all up to do comics. Sure, the appeal is there but the money isn't. The food chain in comics is very linear and very, very small at the top. There are dozens of questions that you must evaluate before sending out submissions. Look at the types of titles a publisher does. Are you submitting something that is very similar? Check out their sales rankings? Will your title somehow magically catapult to the top? Are the titles they're doing based around a single world or core group of characters? If so, it's not likely that they will allow you to muck it up. Does the company do only creator owned titles? Do they do any creator owned titles? Do they seem to have a certain art style? How many titles do they do? If the publisher has a long running history of publishing one or two titles, they are probably not interested in expanding. At Caliber, like so many other companies, going through the submission stack is a chore that no one is excited to do. One, it is very time consuming and takes away from other work that has to be done. Two, unless the company has put out a request for submissions, it is going through material that you never asked for in the first place. And third, it can be frustrating because all of the questions asked above were obviously not addressed. Most companies put out guide lines, not to solicit submissions, but to hopefully curb the obvious ones not suitable.

Some General Tips: If you don't include a self addressed stamped envelope (SASE), more than likely you will not get a reply. Why should a publisher pay for envelopes and stamps for

something that they didn't ask for in the first place? Sending your work fed-ex or priority mail usually doesn't get much more attention. If the package is opened immediately (lots of times, submitters try to "fool" the editors), it usually just ends up on the same pile as everyone else. Expect form letters. They can be cold and impersonal but they're the most efficient way of handling the sheer number. Calling to see if they got your package. Don't. This irritates most publishers and should only be done on the larger companies that have a full time person devoted to submissions. Publishers get very upset in having to drop everything to see if a package was delivered. Send it with a signature required if you want. Then you know the publisher got it. But make sure you mark it as a submission. Don't send teasers. We still get dozens of these where someone will send us a blurb on a project but because they're worried about someone stealing their idea, they don't send out any further information. Copyright it first if you want. But I can't think of anything that intrigued me enough to "ask" for a submission. Most publishers will not go to your website or download pictures you sent as an attached file. Sure, it's easier for you but for the publisher? Usually, the first response is the delete key on the email button. But it's not all negative. New people are always breaking in and if you're really talented, you got a shot. Your best bet is to go to the larger conventions and show your work (for writers...well, there just isn't an easy way to do it.) get feedback from those looking at submissions. And if a publisher is not looking at submissions, pleading and begging him/her to look at yours is not going to convince them usually that you have the "magic" that they have been searching for all of these years. If you receive positive feedback, know your market and publishers and send them out. And remember this when you get your first rejection (probably a form letter), the decision was probably based on one person's opinion...a person who is looking through stacks and stacks of proposals who is bleary eyed and wondering how they're going to catch up on their other work because of the time spent on these submissions.

The best way to do a proposal in today's market requires substantial more work than it used to. You need to send out as much as you can in a package that is easy to handle and professionally done. Let the publishers see what the finished work will be. Let them know you can do more than pretty pinups. And, this is a very important AND, if a publisher contacts you to draw a few pages of a certain character...jump on it. I know one artist who tried out at Marvel and was given a number of short scripts to draw. By the time he received the third one, he was fed up. However, they were evaluating how fast he could turn the pages around and how diverse he was. He would've had a regular assignment at Marvel on one of their mainstay characters if he had completed the last assignment. Believe me, no publisher is going to waste his time jacking you around. If they're sending you sample work, there is a reason.

Gary Reed
Caliber Comics
www.calibercomics.com
garyr@bluelinepro.com

You only have about 12 different colors to begin with...

These Are The Themes Of Color

by Steve Oliff

Like music, color has themes. It has keys and harmonies. It speaks with melodies and variations. Using only a few notes, repeated in octaves of light, color permeates our world.

All application of color in art follows the laws of physics governing the medium you're working in. If you work in paint, you're dealing with pigment and its ability to stain. If you color on a computer you have to keep in mind screen calibration and end destination. If you use colored pencils you look for softness of lead, opacity, and its ability to blend.

Every one of them is a variation on a theme. Using the same concepts of color, you can adapt it to fit any artistic need. What you need are the tried and true secrets. They say there are only a few basic storylines, well the same is true about color schemes.

It's how you repeat yourself that counts.

You only have about 12 different colors to begin with, but by making tints and shades, and controlling the intensity, your spectrum is vast.

I learned the basic themes of color from a Walter Foster book that my Mom gave me when I was a teenager. It's called Color with Palette knife and Brush by Merlin Enabnit, the Color Wizard. She'd used his techniques to radically improve her colors on a new series of oil paintings. I was a sophomore in high school at the time. I was impressed, and loved his book. I built my career from the basic concepts that I learned in that little book. You know, the Cool vs Warm concept, monochrome, duochrome and related sequences, grays to rest the eye. All that stuff. The real basics. It's out of print, but it's well worth buying if you see one in a used bookstore. The ideas I adopted are directly descended from

what I learned from the Color Wizard and direct observation of the universe in action. The way light reacts in nature is always surprising even when you think you know what you're seeing. When you understand the theory behind a gorgeous sunset it gives it an extra edge. A theory about why that sky looks great in terms of its natural Color Harmony. A little light theory (Physics) so you understand why this day looks so different from last Thursday. On this particular Thursday, it's the first storm of the new year, and the light this morning was a pinkish gray. Last week I had sunshine. That changes everything.

The real themes of color are in the harmony of light, and the physical craft of recreating color in your art. The conceptual and the material. In comics it's: Editorial and Manufacturing.

That's what this magazine is all about. Helping you find out what the techniques are that will allow you to take the classic themes of comics, and then actually be able to create them. This particular article is not giving you technique.

In my opinion, it's always concept first, and then technique. When you put your technical facility first, and skip the theory, you're missing the point. But you wouldn't do that now, would you?

You can contact Steve at:
steveo@bluelinepro.com



There are artist that have started to merge traditional coloring like watercolor and painting with digital coloring to create a natural effect with spectacular results.

By Christopher Riley

Put away those Crayons

As everyone knows by now computers have changed the way we humans go about our everyday lives. Computers have even infiltrated the comic book industry. The first signs go back to the mid-80's when Rust #1 was put out as the first comic book created completely on a computer. It was pixilated and rough around the edges but opened the arena to everyone's imagination. DC set a high standard when in the early 90's they produced Batman Digital Justice created by Pepe Moreno. This book had more of a 3-D rendered video game look to it, not quite the comic book feel. Then in 1992 Malibu and Image comics started something that is still the standard to this day. Digital coloring that has the look of an actual airbrush but the preciseness of a computer.

Today digital coloring is even more detailed. There are artist that have started to merge traditional coloring like watercolor and painting with digital coloring to create a natural effect with spectacular results. These methods will be discussed later.

Tools of the Trade

Before we get started I will go over some of the equipment that you will need to have in your possession to follow along. Of course the first is a computer. Some of you may not realize this but there are two different types of desktop computers out there. There are PCs that run Microsoft Windows.

The other is the Macintosh created by the wonderful people at Apple. You can use either desktop platform to do digital coloring. The main program we are going to use is Adobe Photoshop. Photoshop runs

...digital coloring that has the look of an actual airbrush but the preciseness of a computer.

exactly the same on either system except that the keyboard shortcuts are just a little different. I recommend nothing less than a 233MHz processor with at least 32MB of RAM. If you can afford more get it. Digitally colored files are large and can slow down even the fastest computer. In this case the bigger computer is better. Slower computers will work but you may have to take a nap waiting for the application to complete the smallest task. Next you will need a scanner. The one I use is a Microtek Scanmaker. There are many types of Scanners out there. When you buy one make sure it can scan in at least 8 1/2 X 11 size and up to 300dpi. As mentioned above we are going to be using Adobe Photoshop for our digital coloring. This program is a personal favorite of mine. Out of all the colorist I've talked to over the years 99% of them use Photoshop. There are other programs that are cheaper and more expensive. The cheaper ones are sufficient but lack the creative control that Adobe offers. The more expensive programs work just as well as Photoshop but are a little expensive.

A quick note.

The program Photoshop we are using is a very complex software program. There are many different ways to accomplish the same task and get the same results. What I have written is the best way that I have found to color comic book art. IT IS NOT THE ONLY WAY TO COLOR. Like I stated it is the best way that I have found that works for me and many other colorists. If you know of a better way for you to color then use it. There are some basic rules that you do have to go by to ensure that your image will be crisp and clear.

Starting your Masterpiece

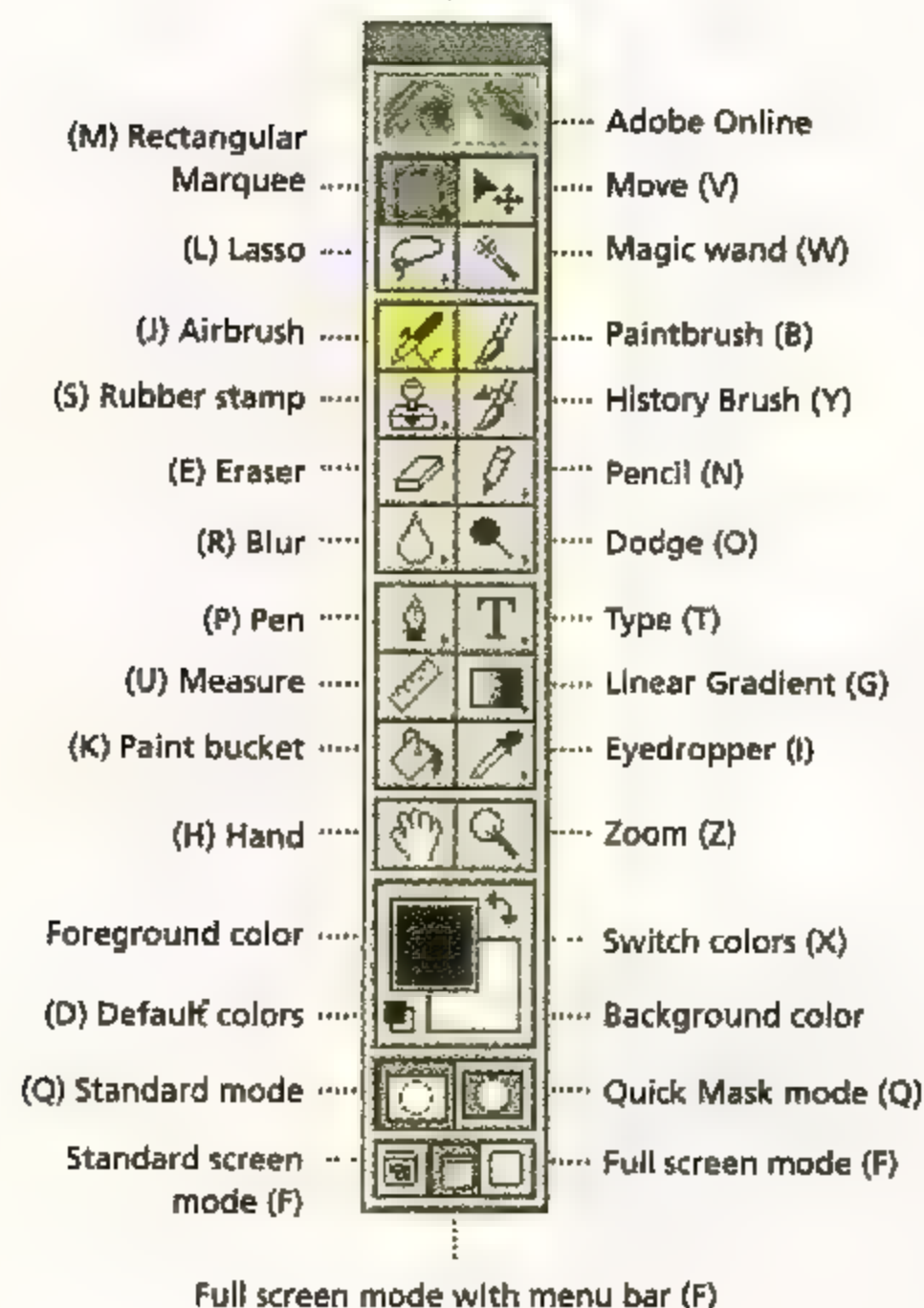
The initial steps to creating a digitally colored image are somewhat mundane but they must be learned and used before you can get to the coloring. The first thing you must know is that all of the artwork that you are going to be coloring needs to be solid line art. No gray pencil marks or shaded areas. Solid black ink on white paper. There are ways of coloring pen-

ciled art and gray washes but we will get to that later.

1. The first step is to get your art to the right size. If you are using Blue Line Pro's comic book art boards the finished size of your original art is at 10x15 inches. If a page has a bleed on it then add a quarter inch to that measurement. As I mentioned above you need a scanner that will scan at least 8.5" x 11". Unless you have an 11" x 17" scanner you will need to go to a copy shack and have your original art reduced to 8.5" x 11 so that it fits your



For this Parts Unknown Trading Card I used various effects to give the scene a dark menacing feel. I concentrated the light source on the main character while keeping most of the other objects in the image dark and heavily shadowed. Reds and purples were used to enhance the carnage taking place in this scene while I used milder tones on the dangling heads to give the feeling that there is no life in them. Finally for the sky I scanned in a photo of a sunset that I had recently snapped a picture of and layered it behind the window line art. We will touch on this technique later.



The Tools of Photoshop

The Airbrush Tool

Each month we are going to highlight a tool from the Adobe Photoshop Tool Palette. This is to help you better understand the program you are working with. So that when I call for you to grab the Linear Gradient tool and apply a 50% vertical gradation of red to yellow you will be able to accomplish this much faster and know what I'm talking about.

The first tool we are going to be focusing on is the Airbrush Tool. This is one of the most important tools that is used in the coloring process. It helps you create soft blends, apply gradual tones, fill in large areas of white space, and create glow effects. The edges of the stroke are diffused to create these effects. The pressure setting controls how quickly the spray of paint is applied. There are many other uses for this tool that we will touch on in future articles. Lets just get the basics down first.

You will want to have the Options palette and the Brushes/Color/Swatches palette group displayed.

Steps:

1. Select a foreground color to paint with.
2. Double-click the Airbrush tool to open it's options palette.
3. Specify the color mode and opacity in the options palatte.
4. Select a brush size from the Brushes palatte.
5. Drag in the image to paint.

There are many variations and different settings that you can experient with using the Airbrush tool. Try them on some of your own comic book line art.



A black and white image scanned in at 300dpi.



Fleshtones created using the Airbrush tool to render soft lighting and and smooth textures.

scanner. "Scan your art in at 6.75" x 10.25". This is the trimmed, finished size of most comic books. Check with your printer to confirm that this measure works with their specs. They will be able to give you an exact measurement. When scanning in your art make sure it is set to bitmap mode so that your whites and blacks are 100%. Make sure that it is set to 300dpi.

2. Once you have the image in Photoshop it will need to be converted to grayscale. Go to the Image drop down menu, then to Mode and select Grayscale. A small box will appear in the middle of the screen that says Size Ratio. Type the number 1 in the open field and click OK. This keeps your artwork crisp in the transfer from the Bitmap image to the Grayscale image.

3. Now we will convert our image into a color mode. Go back to the Mode list and click the line that says RGBcolor. This is the mode we will be coloring in. The reason for this is that it keeps the file size down to a minimum, which will let you work a little faster. Photoshop has a special setting that lets a person work in RGB mode but the preview on the screen is in CMYK. To set this go to the View drop down menu, then to Preview and select CMYK.

The reason for us wanting to be able to preview our art in CMYK while we are coloring in RGB is so that we know what the final image is going to look like.

4. In this step we are going to be using the layers pallet. If it is not already open go to the Window drop down list and select Show Layers. It should appear on the right hand side of your screen as a floating pallet.

Double Click on the layer titled Background. A window will appear in the middle of the page titled Make Layer. Name the layer Line Art and click OK. On the right side of the layers pallet is a small arrow button pointing right. Select this and then click New Layer. In the New Layer box name the layer Color Art and click OK.

Now go to the Edit drop down menu and select fill. Use white when filling this layer.

After that click and drag the Color layer below the Line Art layer. To check and see if you did this right your Line Art image should reappear. Now double click the Line Art layer. In the Layer Options window select the right arrow on the This Layer line that says 255. Drag this arrow slightly to the left until the number 255 changes to 254 and click OK. This makes the white areas on the Line Art layer transparent but keeps the black areas solid. Now select the Color Art layer. This is the layer we will be working on until we are completely finished. All of your coloring will be done on this layer. Go ahead and experiment by grabbing the airbrush and coloring on this layer. You will notice that the color does not cover up the Line Art layer.

That should just about rap things up for this month. If anyone has any questions or comments please feel free to write me.
Christopher Riley
chrisr@bluelinepro.com



On this Warlace piece I used a photo for the background. The difference on this image from the Parts Unknown one is that the Photo of the statue in the background was converted to lineart. I then used various shades of grey and white along with different sized brushes with the dissolve setting applied to them to create the stone effect.



Along with his duties with Sketch Magazine, **Bob Hickey** has been the creative force behind Blood & Roses, StormQuest and Tempered Steele an on-line netcomic beginning in June, 2000 at www.sacredstudios.com. He oversees production at Sacred Studios which is currently packaging Parts Unknown for Image Comics. Bob is one of the co-founders of Blue Line Productions.



Beau Smith created and writes Parts Unknown currently at Image Comics, writer of The Undertaker for Chaos Comics, The Tenth, Wynonna Earp, Spawn: Book Of Souls, Batman/Wildcat and the two upcoming cross overs-Xena/Wonder Woman and Wolverine/Shi.



Chris Riley has done everything from lettering and paste-up to full comic book production. In this time he has helped to publish over 40 comic books for various publishers and self-published two of his own books. He has been doing computer coloring for over seven years. Some of his current projects include a Parts Unknown mini-series for Image Comics, Sketch Magazine, various CD labels for bands and DJ's, and self publishing his comic book Brainwalker.



Paul Sizer teaches graphic design at Western Michigan University, runs his own freelance design and illustration business, and in his spare time writes, illustrates and designs his comic book LITTLE WHITE MOUSE, published by Caliber Comics. Paul lives and works in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Tom Bierbaum with wife Mary has scripted such comics as Legion of Super-Heroes and The Heckler for DC Comics, Xena and Return to Jurassic Park for Topps Comics, Star for Image Comics and Dead Kid Adventures a creator owned project by Knight Press.

Joe Corroney is the instructor for Comic Book-Cartooning Class at the Columbus College of Art and Design in Columbus, Ohio. He has worked on various comic books for a variety of publishers including Dead-Kid and Blood and Roses for Knight Press, Green Lantern for DC Comics, and his creator-owned title for World Famous Comics, Death Avenger which will premiere later this year. His freelance art career includes working as an illustrator for White Wolf Games and official licensees such as Lucasfilm, Sony, and Paramount Pictures creating artwork for Star Wars, Men In Black, and Star Trek books, games, and magazines. You can see more of Joe's artwork and visit his official website when it launches in early 2000 through the www.wfcomics.com website.

Steve Oliff is the founder of Olyoptics. Steve has over 20 years of experience in the industry. From the full color TV adaptation of the Hulk in 1978, to Akira in '88, and the computer revolution, to Spawn and the Maxx. He's colored in every style imaginable, and for almost every publisher.

Dan Davis was born in Celina, Ohio on Sept. 18, 1957. A very short time later he was hooked on comics, both strips and books and decided to make it his career.

After a brief stint apprenticing for New York comic book artist Dan Adkins, he returned to Ohio to finish college and find a "real" job. But he kept sending samples to the large comic companies and freelancing on the side to the small ones.

Finally in 1990 DC comics liked his inks enough to send him a Flash Annual and soon he was in the comics business full time. Since then he has worked on many popular characters such as Superman, Superboy, Animaniacs, Flintstones/Jetsons, Scooby-Doo, Garfield, and Alley Oop. And recently he's added writing and penciling credits to his established inking credentials.

Currently he is busy inking the Star Spangled Kid comic book, Stars and S.T.R.I.P.E. at DC, and continues to freelance on various comics projects.

He lives in Celina, Ohio with his wife Lisa, and kids Alex and Hannah.

Gary Reed is the publisher of Caliber Comics. Caliber Comics over the years has showcased talented creators such as Guy Davis, Mike Allred, Vince Lock and many more. Gary has been very successful bringing literature comics to the market with Tomb Press.

We are looking for creators to share their insights, experiences and tips.

If you work in the comic book industry and would like to contribute to Sketch Magazine, Contact Bob Hickey at 606-282-0096, fax: 606-282-9412 or email: bobh@bluelinepro.com.

COMIC BOOK ART TIPS & TECHNIQUES

SKETCH

FEBRUARY 2000 VOL. 1, NUMBER 1 - ISSUE 1

Bob Hickey Creative Director

Chris Riley Managing Editor

Editorial Contributors

Beau Smith, Gary Reed, Steve Oliff, Paul Sizer, Dan Davis, Tom Bierbaum, Joe Corroney, Ward LeRoc, Dan Souder.

Artistic Contributors

Steve Oliff, Paul Sizer, Dan Davis, Lee Moder, Joe Corroney, Brad Gorbey, David Mack.

Cover Illustration David Mack

Cover Photography Chris Riley

Sacred Studios Design

For Advertising Information:

SKETCH MAGAZINE

8385 U.S. Highway 42

Florence, KY 41042

custser@bluelinepro.com

<http://www.bluelinepro.com>

ph: 606-282-0096 / fax: 606-282-9412

Sketch Comic Book Art Tips & Techniques Magazine is published bi-monthly (six times a year) by Blue Line Productions, 8385 U.S. Highway 42, Florence KY 41042, USA. Periodicals postage paid in Florence, KY and at additional mailing offices. Specialty Shop distribution handled by Diamond Comics Distributors, FM International. Basic subscription rates: one year (six issues) \$35.70 U.S., \$49.00 Canada & Mexico, \$98.00 Foreign. Prepaid in U.S. funds only. POSTMASTER send changes of address to Sketch Magazine 8385 U.S. Highway 42, Florence, KY 41042. Entire contents copyright 2000 Blue Line Productions. All Rights Reserved. Reproduction in whole or part is prohibited. PRODUCED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Blue Line

PRODUCTIONS

Blue Line Productions,

8385 U.S. Highway 42,

Florence, KY 41042

(606) 282-0096 / www.bluelinepro.com

CEO - Mike Hickey

Creative Director - Bob Hickey

Circulation - Carol Doolin

Comic books are a fun media and one of the few that anyone could create their own visions to share with others.

Blue Line Productions goals are aimed toward the enhancement of art through knowledge and quality art supplies.

No Matter what it takes we make sure that the reader has the information that they are wanting.

Any statements made, expressed or implied in Sketch Magazine are solely those of columnists or persons being interviewed and do not represent the editorial position of the publisher, who does not accept responsibility for such statements.

All characters and artwork shown in Sketch Magazine are trademark and copyright of their respective owners. Enter contents copyright 2000 Blue Line. Publication may not be reproduced in part or whole in any form without written permission of Blue Line.

KABUKI ART CONTEST

You Can Win...

HOW CAN YOU WIN?



1

PRIZE

It's easy just grab a piece of Blue Line's customized papers and draw your favorite Noh Agent...

...that's it.

All winners will be posted on Blue Line's internet site at
WWW.BLUELINEPRO.COM

You can send in as many enters as you want.
Remember the more you draw the better you get.

Some of David's elementary rules are:

Less is more

Only render in detail what is important

Go for contrast

(contrast of color)

(contrast of negative and positive space)

(contrast in detail)

(contrast in realism)

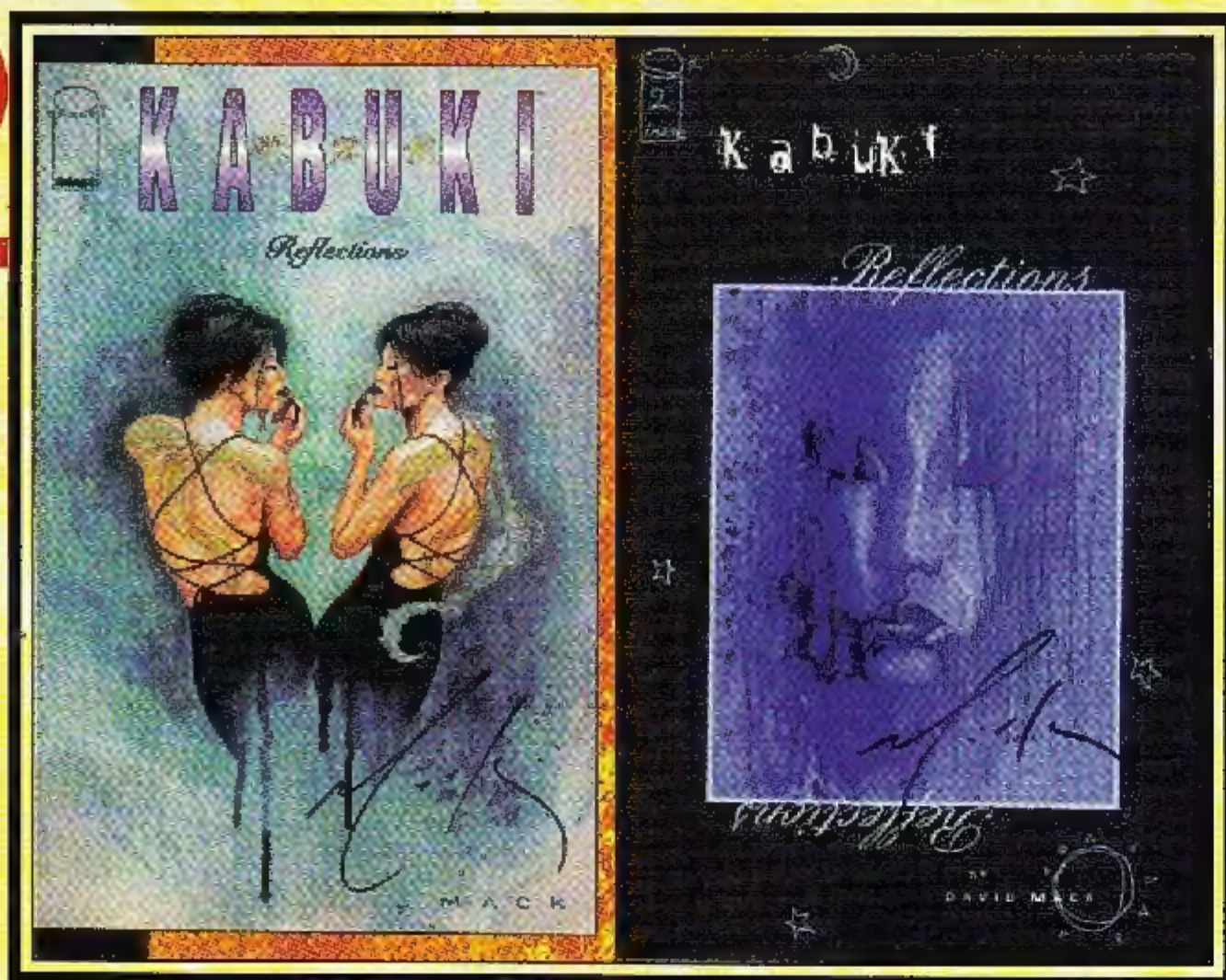
KABUKI: Masks Of The Noh
Hard Cover Signed by David Mack

Send all entries to:

Sketch Magazine
8385 U.S. Highway 42
Florence, KY 41042

2

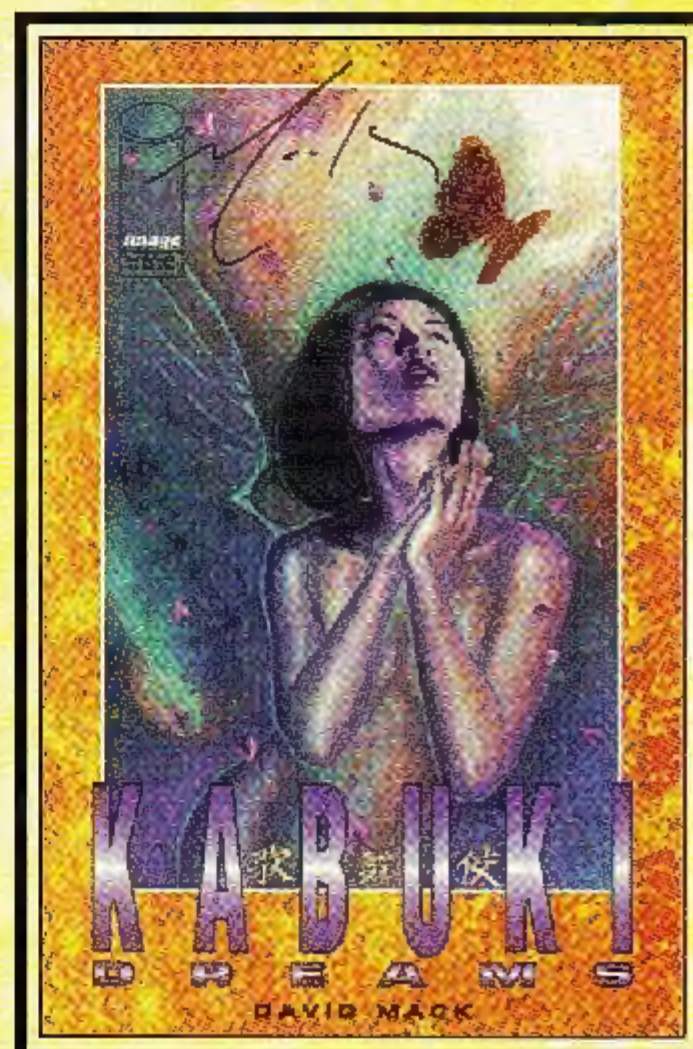
PRIZE



KABUKI: Reflections #1 and Reflections #2
Both signed by David Mack

3

PRIZE



KABUKI: Dreams
Signed by David Mack

Please include your name, address and e-mail address with each entry.

Parts Unknown Is.....

Bad Sex and Ugly Violence.

Teeth Extracting Action.

Red Meat Aggression.

On Time Cause All

Five Issues Are

Already Done.

The Best Guilty

Pleasure You'll

Never Admit To

Reading

Read Parts Unknown--Get Aggressive!

A Preview Of Things To Come.....

PARTS

UNKNOWN

KILLING ATTRACTION

by Beau Smith, Brad Gorby and Richard Pollard

WWW.SACREDSTUDIOS.COM

image



WILDBLUEZERO